



## LIFESTYLE/DI

Prom  
dos and  
don'ts

## WORLD/A10

Lethal bird flu  
virus spreads  
to Africa

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph



## BUSINESS/B1

Coco-based  
exports jumped  
14.6% in 2005

## WORLD/A10

VP Cheney  
lacked hunting  
license



## GI in hot water for shooting stray animals at Sulu camp

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PERHAPS THIS AMERICAN SOLDIER LIKES LIVE subjects for target practice.

Lt. Mike Rice, a member of the US Navy Seal Team 1 taking part in the RP-US Balikatan military exercises in Sulu, has gotten into the habit of

GI IN HOT / A20

# PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, February 15, 2006

EDITIONS / Vol. 21 / No. 69 P18 website: www.inq7.net



**ROSES  
FROM  
SPECIAL  
KIDS**  
President Macapagal-Arroyo gets red roses from hearing-impaired students of the Philippine Institute for the Deaf in Pasay City. The President visited the school on Valentine's Day.

EDWIN BACASMAS



FROM THE INSIDE looking out. Peering through the gate of his Tanay resthouse, former President Joseph Estrada watches actress Susan Roces and former Vice President Teofisto Guingona plant seedlings to launch his Freedom from Hunger movement.

# Gov't raises La Niña alert

All agencies ordered to prepare for heavy rains during summer

By Blanche S. Rivera

LA NIÑA, A WEATHER phenomenon characterized by heavy rains, is coming.

Malacañang has ordered all government agencies to prepare for the onslaught of heavy rains during the summer months as the weather bureau noted consistent indications of a La Niña in the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo met with Cabinet officials in Malacañang on Saturday for a briefing with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) on recent weather disturbances that killed 14 people and displaced at least 5,700 families.

Increases in the incidence of typhoons, floods and frequent heavy rains since November last year may be explained by the development of La Niña, Pagasa said.

"The persistence of present oceanic and atmospheric patterns in the next two months will confirm the occurrence of a La Niña episode and continue to influence the climate of the Philippines," Pagasa chief Graciano Yumal said at a press briefing yesterday.

"Conditions in the country will be characterized by normal to above normal rainfall at least up to May, the probability of more tropical cyclones within the PAR (Philippine Area of Responsibility) and flooding in some areas," he said.

GOV'T RAISES/A20



MORE THAN 4,000 people head for safety after nonstop rains spawned floods and mudslides on Panay Island, Leyte. With total damage to crops and property that could reach P100 million, the government has placed the province under a state of calamity. (See story on Page A18.) JAY NARANZA

Ombudsman faces contempt over P1.3-B Comelec mess

By Armand N. Nocum,  
Jerome Aning  
and Philip C.ubeza

NEWLY APPOINTED OMBUDSMAN Merceditas Gutierrez faces contempt charges for the failure of her office to determine the criminal liability of Benjamin Abalos, chair of the Commission on Elections, and other poll officials linked to irregularities in the P1.3-billion automated counting machine deal.

The Supreme Court yesterday ordered the Ombudsman to explain why it should not be held in contempt of court for not complying with its directive to determine the criminal liability of officials involved in the voided contract between the Comelec and Megapacific Corp.

The court was referring to its

OMBUDSMAN/A8

## OFW blew lid off secret 'shabu' flea market

By Ramon Tufo

IF THE PEOPLE AT THE MAPAYAPA compound hadn't beaten up one of their customers, the "shabu flea market" in the heart of Pasig City might still be doing brisk business today.

The customer was an overseas Filipino worker on a long vacation from the Middle East.

Few people know that in the planning of Friday's police raid on the drug enclaves, a suggestion came up that heliborne troops be dropped onto the compound for the assault, but this was rejected because such a

strike could provoke bloody fighting, according to information obtained by the INQUIRER.

Every day, hundreds of "scorers" or "shabu" users entered the place, which operated 24 hours. It was a compound that never slept.

The mauling incident was reported by the OFW to a media colleague, Erwin Tufo, my brother. At the time, Erwin was still hosting for ABS-CBN the "Mission X" program dealing with exposés on the ugly side of life. The show has since moved to another channel.

By the OFW's account, he had

GOV'T RAISES/A20

By Dona Pazzibugan  
and Edson Tandoc Jr.

ONE IS A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO is eight months pregnant. Another is aged 14 with a 4-month-old fetus growing inside her.

Both have tested positive for

quacy and negligence of the organization that sponsored the game show "Wowowee."

"It's not fair to blame the sponsors for the victims because they are poor," she said in an interview over dzRH radio.

In a statement issued later in the day, ABS-CBN said: "We are saddened that President Arroyo

blame on the victims because they are poor," she said in an interview over dzRH radio.

When Deputy Speaker Emilio Espinosa Jr. ordered a roll call, only 110 House members (out of 226) responded. It would seem that

GMA HITS/A6

## Blasted hopes, broken dreams for 14 minors

By Dona Pazzibugan  
and Edson Tandoc Jr.

ONE IS A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL WHO is eight months pregnant. Another is aged 14 with a 4-month-old fetus growing inside her.

Both have tested positive for

drugs and they were among 14 mi-

nors who will be charged with illegal drug use after they were rounded up with 300 other people during a police raid on a compound of "shabu restaurants" in Pasig City, officials said yesterday.

Theirs are the tales of blasted

hopes and broken dreams, social workers said.

They knew that using drugs is wrong. But something inside them had also gone wrong, city social welfare head Francisca Delleva told the Inquirer.

Delleva said most of the chil-

dren who tested positive for drugs came from broken families. Officials said the 14 minors, aged 14 to 17, would be charged along with around 200 adults who were arrested in Friday's raid which showed how widespread the menace of a P214-billion illegal drugs industry had become.

"Charges will be filed against

BLASTED/A20



## 'Love' fills the halls of Congress

By Michael Lim Ubac  
and Norman Bordadora

LOVE, ACTUALLY, FILLED THE HALLS OF Congress on Valentine's Day.

Some lawmakers yesterday spread their

heart-filled messages by text, while others gave out cookies and chocolates.

When Deputy Speaker Emilio Espinosa Jr. ordered a roll call, only 110 House members (out of 226) responded. It would seem that

LOVE/A6

## WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern sections of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY JAMES ALARCON, PI RESEARCH/02/13/06

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Batangas	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Tarlac	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Quezon	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Lucena	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Catanduanes	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Marinduque	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Tayabas	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rain	Cloudy with Rain
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rain	Cloudy with Rain
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rain	Cloudy with Rain
Davao	Cloudy with Rain	Cloudy with Rain

# Senate told: Cha-cha or bust

By Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA YESTERDAY WARNED SENATORS opposed to Charter change that they risked becoming "irrelevant" if they failed to support the shift to a parliamentary system.

"We don't wish to say that they will become irrelevant but that's what's going to happen," the Speaker said in a press briefing.

"It's our hope that statesmanship will prevail in the Senate ... and will respond to the call of our people to effect changes in the Constitution to save our country from this impossible system of constant chaos, paralysis and gridlock..." said De Venecia.

The House has decided to push through with Charter change, even without the participation of the Senate.

De Venecia said the initiative to gather 195 signatures of "all members of Congress," voting jointly, to constitute the Senate and the House into a constituent assembly to authorize Charter change could be finished

in 30 days.

He said the constitutional provision authorizing the revision of the Constitution by a three-fourths vote of all members of Congress was "very clear, there's no room for ambiguity."

The Senate insists that only a majority of both chambers, voting separately, could convert Congress into a constituent assembly to amend the Charter.

The Senate also wants the amendments to be done by way of a constitutional convention, which De Venecia thinks would be too long and too expensive.

"We're not trying to abolish the Senate here. Both will be replaced ... by a unicameral parliament," De Venecia said.

He expects a challenge to be

brought before the Supreme Court but said he believes "in the judicial statesmanship of the Supreme Court" to stand by the House interpretation.

He said a "two-track initiative" for Charter change would be set into motion in the "next 48 hours," starting with the signature campaign in the House and a people's initiative to be launched by 100 people's and non-government organizations at the Ninoy Aquino stadium today.

Rep. Constantino Jaraula said the House committee on constitutional amendments, which he chairs, has already completed the debates on specific amendments.

Once the 195 signatures are gathered, the new Charter will be presented for adoption by the plenary and a joint session could be convened by March 15.

Senators, including allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo, scoffed at the 30-day ultimatum.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Senate would not be rushed into completing its hearings on what mode to adopt.

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said what De Venecia was doing was unconstitutional which he would have to answer for before the SC.

"We reject this brazen attempt to ram Cha-cha down our throats. I predict that this ultimatum will convince a total of zero senators," said Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan.

"No need to wait for 30 days. He can have my answer now. No to concentration of power. No to *kami-kami*, *tayo-tayo* [cronyist] politics. No to Cha-cha," said Sen. Manuel Roxas.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the House has to to set its priorities right by transmitting the 2006 budget measure to the Senate before tackling Charter change.

## AFP warns would-be rebels as Magdalo boys go to court

By Tarra V. Quismundo  
and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE MILITARY WARNED YESTERDAY IT would court-martial soldiers who heed escaped mutineers' call for them to wear red armbands as a sign of protest, and fielded up to 400 troops to prevent any more escapes as 21 detained Oakwood mutineers appeared before a Makati court trying them on coup d'etat charges.

Armed Forces spokesman Col. Tristan Kison issued the warning even as the military top brass has insisted that the troops were solidly behind their embattled commander-in-chief.

Apart from not being part of a soldier's uniform, wearing red arm bands even when they're in civilian clothes would constitute "violation of good order and military discipline because it's a sign of defiance," Col. Tristan Kison told reporters.

The so-called "Magdalo" group which staged the July 27, 2003 mutiny at the Oakwood Premier hotel in Makati has been vocal about their goal to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Four Magdalo officers who escaped from an Army detention facility last Jan. 17 issued statement on Monday urging the public to dramatize their protest against what they allied the "bogus" Arroyo administration by wearing red arm bands.

Meanwhile, in spite of the unusually heavy security thrown around them, one of the 23 accused soldiers who appeared in court yesterday managed to speak with reporters for five minutes before he was called away by a court employee to sign an attendance sheet.

"Our group is calling on the people to choose, decide, whether we would stay under his system run through corruption and deception, or will we take the stand for truth and change?" said 1st Lt. Francisco Ashley Acedillo.

About 30 uniformed Military Police troopers were inside the court room guarding the 21 accused officers. In addition,

about six military agents in civilian clothes guarded Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, who had escaped last Dec. 14 but was recaptured on Jan. 27. Also in court apart from the 21 were two other officers earlier released on bail.

Army Capt. Ramon Zagala II, spokesman for the military's National Capital Region Command said roughly 400 soldiers provided security for yesterday's hearing at Branch 148 of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

Taking their posts as early as sunrise, soldiers were detailed to guard the route of the convoy of roughly 30 military vehicles that escorted the accused to court, the perimeter and surrounding intersections of the old Makati City Hall building, as well as hallway and interior of the Session Hall.

"It's like there's a war here," said lead defense counsel Roel Pulido. "I think this is an indication of how insecure they really are. Two weeks ago they were saying four escapees cannot launch anything, but now they're saying 25 detainees are a threat to national security."

Acedillo appeared undaunted, however, as he approached the reporters. No one made an effort to stop him either.

"Obviously, our detention does not limit our goal," he said. "Physically, you are limited, but that is not the end of one man's aspirations. His thought and awareness extends and expands beyond the jail cell."

Just before the hearing started, he slipped reporters a note in the name of three Magdalo leaders who decided not to attend the hearing — Navy Lieutenants Antonio Trillanes IV and James Layug, and Marine Capt. Gary Alejano. It was the same statement Trillanes issued after a hearing on Jan. 17.

After Judge Oscar Pimentel adjourned the hearing, one of the soldiers handed reporters a white handkerchief bearing the Magdalo insignia printed in red. Written under the insignia in bold black letters were the words: "Sulong Bayani! Ituloy ang Laban (Advance People! Continue the Struggle!)."

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## **Sotto urges seizure of ‘shabu tiangge’ property for drug rehab center**

THE PASIG PROPERTY USED AS  
a "shabu tiangge" should be  
seized and converted into a de-  
tention and drug rehabilitation  
center.

III hurled this challenge at the Department of Justice, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) and the Philippine National Police to deliver a clear and strong message that the govern-

This, Soto said, fulfills the re-

This, Soto said, fulfills the requirement that one of the pillars in drug abuse prevention is reha-

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bilitation. In addition, seizure of the property would be poetic justice and a slap on the face of the drug-traffickers in the area.

The former senator, in a press

statement, cited R.A. 9165, the

Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, Vol. 32, No. 4, December 2007  
DOI 10.1215/03616878-32-4 © 2007 by The University of Chicago

Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002, which stipulates that the property used as a den or resort for illegal drug use may be seized and confiscated in favor of the government.

The Pasig police chief and six members of the PDEA were relieved in the wake of last week's raid on what was described as a "one-stop shabu restaurant" in Pasig.

**GMA: Face  
of EDSA  
has changed**

A WEEK BEFORE THE nation commemorates the 20th year anniversary of the first people power uprising, President Macapagal-Arroyo said "the face of EDSA has changed as far as leaders are concerned." She plans to celebrate it quietly.

But President Arroyo said she did not want to add anything more on what she noted was "this controversy."

"Because the people are tired of politics," Ms Arroyo explained, in an interview over dzRH radio.

The President said that it was better to celebrate the Feb. 22-25 people power uprising with a simple ceremony.

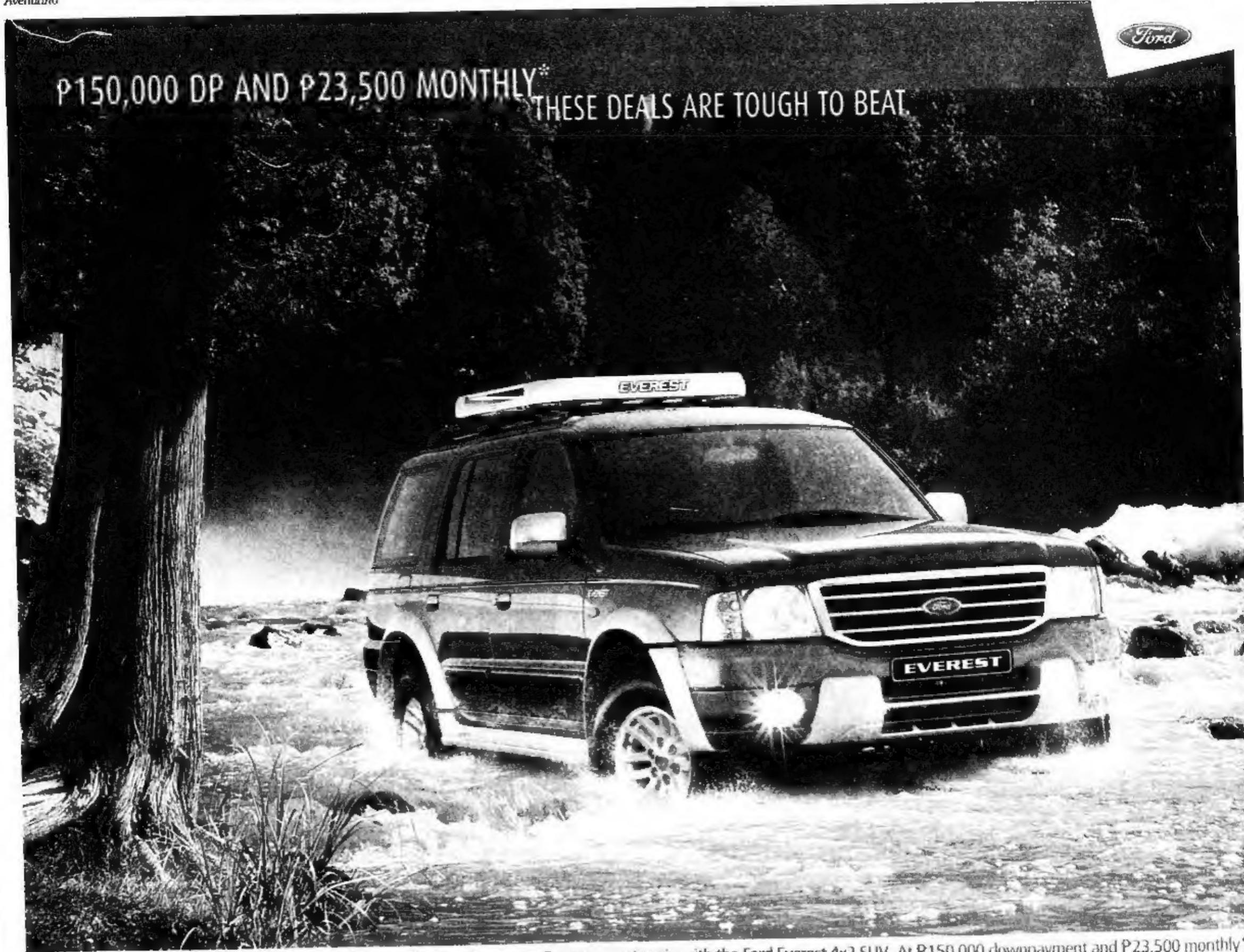
"And each of us can celebrate individually and with meaning," President Arroyo said.

"As for me, I will bring the government to the people on this day as I have been doing every-

At the height of the political crisis that President Arroyo faced last year, various sectors and the Palace have claimed that people were losing faith in launching another people power uprising. *Christine O. Avera*



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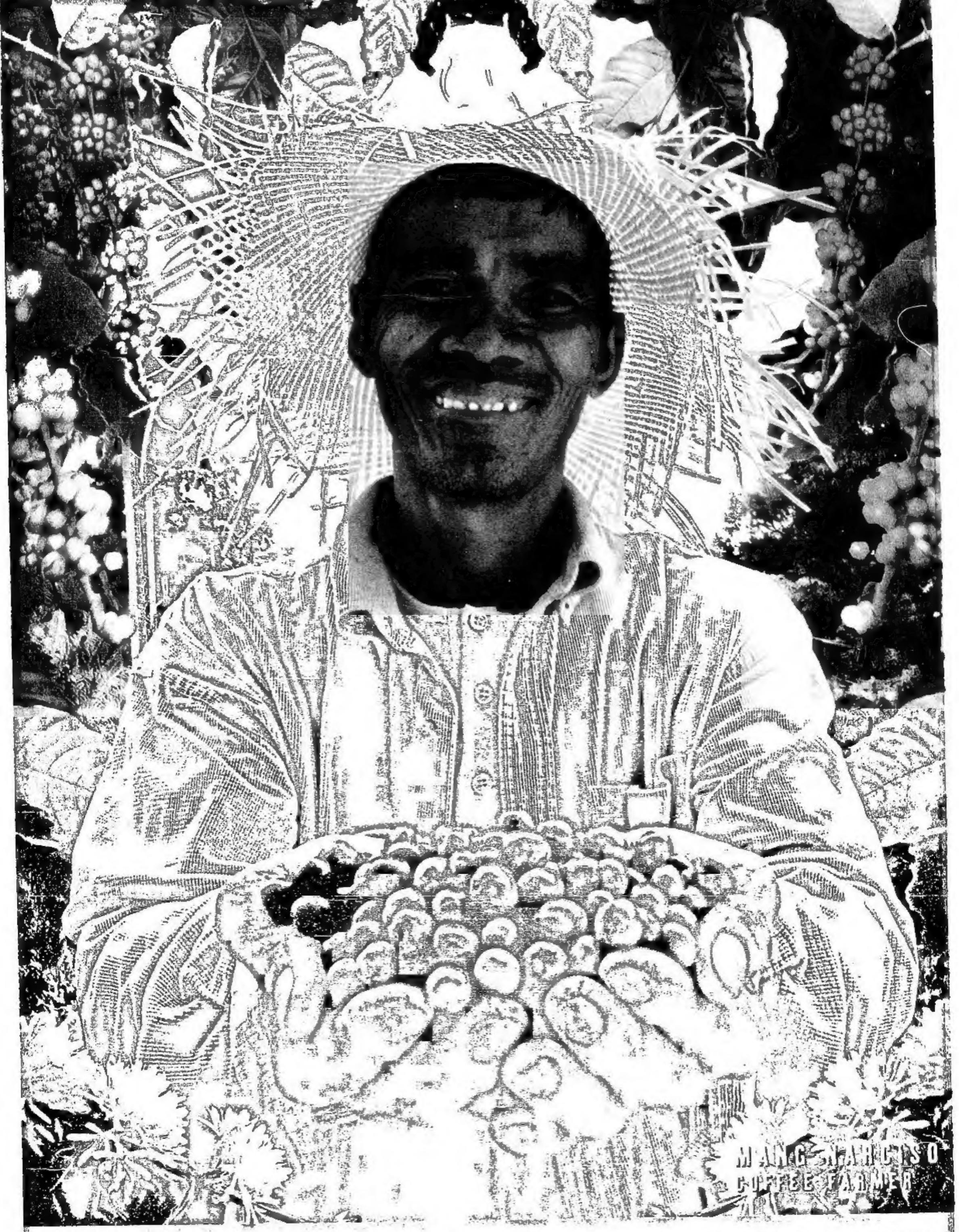
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# GMA hits 'Wowowee' organizers; ABS-CBN miffed



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ISIN	Maturity Date	Coupon Rate	Final Yield	ISIN	Maturity Date	Coupon Rate	Final Yield	ISIN	Maturity Date	Coupon Rate	Final Yield
PIBD0707A209	27-Jan-07	14.50%	7.50%	PIBD0507G456	25-Jul-07	10.75%	7.05%	PIBD0408D094	1-Apr-08	11.375%	8.25%
PIBD0407A037	30-Jan-07	10.50%	7.67%	PIBD0707H275	3-Aug-07	14.25%	7.00%	PIBD0508E494	5-May-08	11.625%	8.32%
PIBD1007A025	30-Jan-07	14.125%	7.57%	PIBD0407H059	14-Aug-07	10.00%	7.50%	PIBD1008E055	26-May-08	11.50%	8.38%
PIBD0207B817	10-Feb-07	8.875%	7.69%	PIBD0707H288	24-Aug-07	14.25%	7.31%	PIBD0308F121	2-Jun-08	9.75%	8.30%
PIBD0107B217	24-Feb-07	14.25%	7.81%	PIBD0707H292	21-Sep-07	14.60%	7.97%	PIBD0508F021	1-Jul-08	10.275%	8.30%
PIBD0507B436	15-Mar-07	13.00%	7.62%	PIBD0507J464	24-Oct-07	11.00%	8.03%	PIBD0508G568	24-Jul-08	11.50%	8.30%
PIBD0307C069	11-Mar-07	11.00%	7.84%	PIBD0407K083	13-Nov-07	10.125%	8.00%	PIBD0408G118	22-Jul-08	11.50%	8.30%
PIBD0707C225	23-Mar-07	14.00%	7.88%	PIBD0307K108	16-Nov-07	11.375%	8.00%	PIBD0408H127	28-Aug-08	11.75%	8.41%
PIBD0507D442	11-Apr-07	13.00%	7.89%	PIBD1007K042	27-Nov-07	22.675%	8.09%	PIBD1008H102	27-Aug-08	11.50%	8.41%
PIBD0707D233	18-Apr-07	13.375%	7.70%	PIBD1007K112	27-Nov-07	11.00%	8.00%	PIBD0508L519	2-Oct-08	10.25%	8.43%
PIBD0707E241	18-May-07	13.875%	7.75%	PIBD0707L305	14-Dec-07	17.25%	8.12%	PIBD0408J134	21-Oct-08	11.875%	8.44%
PIBD0407E042	22-May-07	10.825%	7.76%	PIBD0408A407	8-Jan-08	11.00%	8.17%	PIBD0708K322	15-Nov-08	15.825%	8.49%
PIBD1007E930	20-May-07	13.875%	7.77%	PIBD0508A470	23-Jan-08	16.75%	8.00%	PIBD1008K077	26-Nov-08	18.00%	8.48%
PIBD0707F259	16-Jun-07	13.50%	7.80%	PIBD0708B313	8-Feb-08	16.00%	8.00%	PIBD1008K129	26-Nov-08	17.50%	8.46%
PIBD0507F013	27-Jun-07	12.375%	7.62%	PIBD0408B006	10-Feb-08	10.875%	8.26%	PIBD0408A140	13-Jun-08	12.00%	8.40%
PIBD0307G045	13-Jul-07	14.00%	7.84%	PIBD0308C115	10-Mar-08	10.95%	8.27%	PIBD0308M529	16-Jun-08	10.75%	8.40%

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**INQUIRIES** **BusinessWorld**

From page A1

has prejudged the results of the government investigation into the Ultra stampede.

"[ABS-CBN chair and CEO] Gabby Lopez has already claimed moral responsibility, and ABS-CBN moved immediately to address the needs of the victims and their families. We continue to do so, focusing now on medium- and long-term assistance."

Ms Arroyo made the statement when asked to comment on the attempt of some sectors to put political color to the issue.

More than 70 were killed and hundreds more were injured when mostly unemployed people—many of whom had queued for days—scrambled to gain entry into the PhilSports Arena for the first anniversary show of "Wowowee."

Critics of the administration immediately blamed the government for the tragedy, saying it had failed to alleviate the plight of the poor. They cited the estimated 30,000 who endured the long queue in the hope of winning cash and other prizes.

But Malacañang officials protested what they said were attempts to use the issue of poverty against the President.

### Government's role

Ms Arroyo told dzRH that the role of the government was to determine the circumstances behind the stampede and to bring justice to the victims and their families.

She said the investigation would be fair: "We should show that no one is above the law and that equal rights and equal justice will prevail over wealth or status."

"Whoever is found liable in the investigation should be held responsible."

The Department of Justice is currently investigating the stampede.

The Senate committee on justice and human rights has called for comments "under oath" from persons involved.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, acting chair of the committee, yesterday said letters had been sent out in preparation for an inquiry.

He said the hearings would start "as soon as we get answers that would be useful."

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago had earlier called for an inquiry "in aid of legislation on the criminal and civil liabilities of ABS-CBN and its security officials for the quasi-offense of reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide and multiple grave physical injuries."

Santiago said an investigation was in order because the penal code had to be amended to raise the penalties for reckless imprudence and negligence, "particularly on the part of entertainment firms, including TV stations, that deliberately seek to attract big crowds of people beyond their capacity to manage, thus posing danger to life and limb among the masses."

### Invitations

Ferdinand Lavin, National Capital Region executive officer of the National Bureau of Investigation, said the NBI was preparing to invite "Wowowee" host Willie Revillame to make a formal statement.

"It would only be fair to invite Revillame so he can give us his side," Lavin told reporters.

He said it was possible that the NBI would also invite top ABS-CBN executives to give their own statements this week.

Lavin said the bureau was in the process of taking the statements of the heads of Pasig City government offices.

"Through [their] statements and documents ... we will determine whether they amply responded to ABS-CBN's request for assistance during the event," he said.

## 'Love' fills the halls of Congress

From page A1

most of the country's representatives were busy with their constituents or V-Day gimmicks.

At 4:34 p.m., Espinosa declared a lack of quorum.

But as early as 9 a.m., lawmakers were sending jokes and Valentine text messages to one another, some of which were forwarded to reporters covering the House.

It was Marinduque Rep. Edmund Reyes who fired the first of the love texts: "To a man who inspired virgins, comforted ladies, helped girls in need, shared so many beds and gave many women happy memories, Happy Valentine's Day, friend."

Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara forwarded this message: "This Valentine, may you be showered with girls, or be showered by girls, or be with girls in a shower ... basta (so long as there are) many girls and many showers."

Not to be outdone, House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles of Davao, sent off a message greeting everyone's "maybahay, at sa yong mayaparunt, maycondo, mayparlor at mayscholarship (homemaker, apartment owner, condo owner, parlor owner and those on scholarship)."

Still another text message, sent by Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapid, told the story of a man who married one woman "to escape many other women, and ended up chasing many other women to forget that he's married to one woman. What a romantic life! Cheers!" Lapid said.

### Cookies and chocolates

Representatives Cynthia Villar of Las Piñas, Teofilo Guingona III of Bulacan and Imee Marcos of Ilocos Sur gave away cookies and chocolates.

On Monday, Villar had sent out boxes of chocolate crinkles, while Guingona distributed Cadbury chocolates yesterday.

Marcos—famous for her heartthrob son Borgy Manotoc—handed out cookies filled with white chocolates. They came in red heart-shaped canisters.

Lavin said the NBI had coordinated with the Office of Pasig Mayor Vicente Eusebio and taken the statements of sacked Pasig police chief Senior Supt. Raul Medina; Richard Cuia, chair of Barangay Oranbo, where PhilSports Arena is located, and Insp. Khadafy Bitor, officer in charge of the city's Traffic and Parking Management Division.

He said investigators were scheduled to meet with the chiefs of the Bureau of Fire Protection and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority units that responded to calls for assistance.

"So far, we have completed 60-70 percent of the investigation," Lavin said.

He said the NBI had obtained complete documentation on the deaths of 70 people, the medical certificates of the injured, and sworn statements from 30 vital witnesses.

### Continuing aid

At the Bulong Pulungan forum, Tina Monzon-Palma, program director of ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Bata, said the network would not stop the aid it had been giving the stampede victims even if they decide to go to court. She said, however, that the network could not do anything should the victims refuse help.

"I doubt it. I don't think [so]. All of these are most likely people who would file [a case], but we opted to assist them. But should they refuse [the aid], that's a different story," Palma said when asked if the network would cease helping the victims once a case had been filed.

The nongovernment anticrime group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption had earlier offered to assist those who wished to file a class suit against the network.

Palma said that as of yesterday, nobody had approached ABS-CBN to seek a settlement in exchange for not filing a suit.

But she also said a class suit would help the victims: "It would be to the best interest of all of them. If they can hire individual lawyers, they will. But if they are not that well-off, they can go together to [VACC chair] Dante Jimenez and give all of their salaysay (statements) so we can deal with it."

By ABS-CBN's count, 71 people were killed and over 600 injured in the stampede.</p

WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 15, 2006

AZ

## NEWSBRIEFS

### Erap still has clout with poor, says GMA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-ARROYO YESTERDAY grudgingly admitted that deposed President Joseph Estrada had maintained his mass appeal despite being incarcerated in a Tanay rest house for the last five years.

This strong and resilient following of Estrada prompted Ms Arroyo to rekindle efforts to reconcile with her predecessor who recently met with another faction of the opposition led by former President Corazon Aquino.

"I recognize that President Estrada still has a following and they see his current condition as a reflection of their own situation," Ms Arroyo said in a radio interview.

The President reiterated that she had always been for unity and reconciliation and that healing the wounds of Edsa was in the 10-point agenda she drew up at the start of her fresh six-year mandate in 2004.

Ms Arroyo, however, said that she would not intervene in the plunder case being faced by Estrada at the Sandiganbayan.

"As much as I am averse to other branches of government interfering in the affairs of the executive, I myself should not intervene in the judiciary on these issues," she said.

In Estrada's case, the President said: "It is important that process under the law is part of national unity and reconciliation."

Her chief of staff, Michael T. Defensor, had previously sounded out Malacañang's openness to giving Estrada temporary relief from jail through a recognition.

### Black hearts of protest

BEARING BLACK HEART-SHAPED PLACARDS, some 500 members of the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) held a Valentine's Day protest at the Chino Roces (Merindola) Bridge to press for a P3,000 across-the-board wage increase and the immediate payment of their cost of living allowances (Colas). "This government has impoverished teachers with its salary freeze policy and reduced real spending for public education by 5 percent, resulting in an alarming spike in the number of out-of-school youths," said ACT chair Antonio Tinio in a statement. Militant youth and students also held a rally at Plaza Miranda in Quiapo to celebrate Valentine's in a LovelapLOS-ER teach-in.

Alcuin Papa

### Cha-cha info drive set

MULTISECTORAL GROUPS ARE SET TO GATHER in Manila today to kick off the nationwide Charter change information campaign. Dubbed "Sigaw ng Bayan," the pro-amendment gathering will be held at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium from 8 a.m. to noon. Spearheaded by the Kilusan ng Mamamayan para sa Matatag na Republika (KMMR) — the umbrella of more than 50 urban poor, farmer and fisher folk, student, youth leader and worker groups — "Sigaw" aims to articulate and educate the electorate on how best to tackle the issues affecting the 1987 Constitution.

Tina G. Santos

### No funds to fight smuggling

THE LACK OF FUNDS TO BUILD AN AIRTIGHT case against big-time smugglers remained the biggest stumbling block to the government's antismuggling drive, according to Customs Deputy Commissioner Celso Templo. The Bureau of Customs did not even have an intelligence fund under its 2005 budget, except for P1 million allocated for the maintenance of its computers, he said. "Initially, the bureau needs [some money] to conduct a full-blown investigation and purchase vehicles and communications equipment," Templo said. "We have started the probe; we are gathering evidence and coordinating with other agencies." He called on Congress to provide the funds to provide the government with ammunition to go after smugglers.

### Pinoys insist on 'palusot'

THE FILIPINOS' PENCHANT FOR PALUSOT (TRYING to get away with things) was the reason many of them continued to bring amulets made of bullets on their flights despite repeated warnings by airport authorities, Supt. Rizalino Roxas, Airport Security Center operations chief of the Manila International Airport Authority said yesterday. Between Feb. 4 and 7 alone, a Maa statement said, 11 passengers were found carrying a total of 14 bullets. "The passengers, mostly OFWs, said the bullets were amulets they believed could bring them luck and protect them from evil spirits," the statement said. The passengers were held for questioning but were allowed to board their flights.

Niko Dizon

### Airline raps new security

CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS, THE LARGEST FOREIGN carrier operating at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naa), complained yesterday about the new setup at the final security check at the airport, making it the first airline to openly criticize the innovation. "This new setup has been affecting all airlines' operational requirements," Eddie Monreal, Cathay Pacific station manager, told reporters. Tall wooden partitions have been placed at the two departure concourses of Naa Terminal 1 to segregate "sanitized" from "unsanitized" items and persons — those that had undergone security checks from those that had not. Monreal said the setup contributed to the delay of two Cathay Pacific flights yesterday by as much as 45 minutes. On Monday, one of its flights, as well as two of Northwest Airlines, were nearly delayed because of it.

Niko Dizon



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# Ombudsman faces contempt...

From page A1

ruling of Jan. 13, 2004, that voided MegaPacific's contract to supply the Comelec with 1,991 automated counting machines because the deal was tainted with "graft and legal infirmities."

In the decision penned by then Associate Justice Artemio Pangalanban, the Ombudsman was asked to identify the Comelec officials who may be held criminally liable for the awarding of the contract to the two firms in the MegaPacific consortium.

The Office of the Solicitor General was also asked to take measures to recover the P800 million initially paid to MegaPacific for the counting machines.

The high court's order to Gutierrez came a day after Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo, a former Comelec chair, told senators that he was in possession of documents showing that the MegaPacific contract was overpriced by as much as P500 million.

Benipayo said the Comelec had already paid MegaPacific P1.3 billion.

#### Mental dishonesty

Reacting to the allegation of an overprice, Abalos threatened to sue Benipayo for libel.

Abalos accused Benipayo, his predecessor as Comelec chief, of "mental dishonesty," saying that overpricing was impossible because the agency, as part of bidding procedures, pre-determined the cost of the counting machines at P1.3 billion.

The amount was set when Benipayo was still head of the Comelec, Abalos told reporters at a press conference.

Abalos said the estimate was reached after the Comelec consulted groups like the election watchdog National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections.

"If you bid out a project, you can't go beyond the agency's estimate. We were actually able to get the ACMs at a price much lower than the estimate. So



ABALOS



BENIPAYO

where's the overpricing in that?" he said.

Abalos recalled that after he took over as chair, the Comelec was able to secure a deal with MegaPacific for 1,600 ACMs for P1.2 billion.

Abalos was appointed chair of the Comelec on June 5, 2002. The poll body awarded the contract to MegaPacific on April 13, 2003.

#### Korean firm

MegaPacific may have paid only P500 million to the Korean firm that manufactured the counting machines but the remaining amount could have been used by the consortium for other components of the deal, according to Abalos.

"The deal included hardware, software, security and logistics. I don't know how the consortium actually used the money. For all you know, the software could have been more costly," he said.

He downplayed the findings of Ombudsman graft investigators that he had close ties with other MegaPacific's incorporators.

The investigators noted that Abalos and MegaPacific incorporator Pedro Tan had stood as sponsors in the wedding of a son of two other MegaPacific incorporators, spouses Enrique and Rosita Tansipek.

"With the relationship of

spouses Enrique and Rosita Tansipek and Pedro Tan with Abalos, prudence dictates that Abalos inhibit himself from the whole process," Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. had quoted the investigators as saying.

But Abalos said that his alleged close ties with some of the incorporators could not be used against him because he had known many Filipino-Chinese in his long career as a politician.

"I had been a judge, a mayor. With all those positions, I met a lot of people but that does not mean that they're close to me," he said.

#### Trip to Seoul

Pimentel had said Abalos and other Comelec commissioners also "committed an act of impropriety" when they and their wives traveled to Seoul in 2003 to visit the plant of the Korean firm.

He said he was informed that the plane tickets and hotel accommodations for the trip were bankrolled by the Korean company, contradicting Abalos' claim that the expenses for the trip were paid for out of the P1 million he won in a golf tournament in Wack Wack, Mandaluyong.

#### Resign

"If Chairman Abalos is telling the truth, I challenge him to produce the plane tickets, vouchers

and other documents to support his claim," Pimentel said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, said Abalos and all the Comelec commissioners implicated in the MegaPacific deal would have to resign before the country's electoral system could be computerized.

"That is what we should work for. Not only because of what happened but because we can never have automation for as long as they are there," Arroyo said.

Abalos had insisted that nothing was illegal about the contract and that the Supreme Court ruling nullifying it did not stop the Comelec from using the automated machines to count ballots.

Arroyo said the high court had said that Abalos and his fellow commissioners should "refrain from implementing any other contract or agreement entered into with regard to the (automated election) project."

Arroyo said the Senate could not approve the Comelec request for P1 billion to computerize the country's election system until Abalos and the other commissioners resigned.

He said the present Comelec commissioners were "estopped" by the Supreme Court decision from advocating automated elections or from having anything to do with it "because of their past record."

"So, we cannot approve it because they're still there. Now, if they are not, then we can appropriate the money," Arroyo said. "How can we have a plain and honest election if they're the ones there? They can't even conduct a clean and honest bidding."

The Senate earlier adopted the report of its blue ribbon committee which said that the Comelec commissioners' illegal actions in the MegaPacific deal had put in jeopardy the holding of credible elections in the country.

The committee report said that if the election commissioners did not resign, the "most feasible way to remove them was for the Om-

## SC okays filing of charges against Marcopper officials

From page A1

Placer Dome operated Marcopper when a rock formation around a plug near a drainage tunnel fractured on March 24, 1996, sending millions of tons of open-pit copper mine waste down the 26-km Makulapnit and Boac rivers to the provincial capital.

The following year, Placer Dome cut ties to the Philippines after 33 years of mining on the island.

The cleanup was left to Philippine subsidiaries, according to the lawsuit filed in Nevada by Marinduque Gov. Carmencita Reyes. The complaint said that the subsidiaries did a bad job protecting residents from the ill effects of the tainted air, land and water.

Reyes said Placer Dome had disappeared and ignored pleas from the Marinduque government. She said that the spill had caused "unspeakable poverty and devastation" on the island that used to be a peaceful tropical paradise.

The lawsuit alleges that forests, river basins and coral reefs have been smothered by hundreds of thousands of pulverized mining waste rock and toxic tailings laden with arsenic, cadmium, lead, manganese, nickel and sulfate.

But a spokesperson for Placer Dome has said that the Canadian mining company had only a 40-percent interest in Marcopper and was thus spared by Philippine law from the full responsibilities of a majority shareholder. *With a report from Christine Gayligan*

budsman to file criminal charges against them."

The committee said the Supreme Court, in an August

2003 resolution, rejected the notion that Comelec commissioners cannot be criminally charged before they are impeached.

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The Philippine Plastics Industry Association, Inc. (PPIA), representing more than 1,000 fabricators and converters of plastic resins and employing over 500,000 workers, express our whole-hearted thanks for the issuance of Executive Order No. 486. The EO corrects the tariff distortion that made our industry uncompetitive due to the higher duties on raw materials than those of competing finished plastic products. We use plastic resins and convert them into packaging, industrial and consumer products. Plastics have grown into a major industry cutting across industries like packaging; appliances; household and industrial items; personal care; automotive, construction and housing, and agriculture/aquaculture inputs.

We are likewise grateful to DTI Secretary Peter Favila, NEDA Director General Augusto Santos, DOF Secretary Margarito Teves, DBM Secretary Romulo Neri and all the members of the Cabinet Tariff and Related Matters Committee for steadfastly supporting our advocacy of leveling the playing field for the downstream plastics industry.

The reduction in duty is a big relief to both the plastic producers and consumers as it will soften the impact of the 2 percent increase in the VAT rate this month and the rising cost of plastic resins in the world market. The reduction will lead to a 10 percent increase in consumption of plastic resins and will have a multiplier effect as plastic manufacturing goes through many labor-intensive stages. These include the preparation of the plastic resins i.e. mixing with additives/colorants or compounding before extruding, molding, forming or laminating the plastic product, and additional workers are needed for the cutting, printing, labeling, packing and warehousing stages. All these activities are expected to expand in the process.

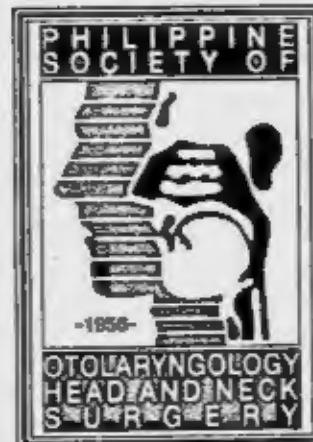
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# The Philippine Society of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery turns

# 50



Centennial Hall, The Manila Hotel, February 17, 2006 (Friday) 1:00 PM

## GOLDEN JUBILEE PROGRAM

- 1:00 pm **Mass**
- 2:00 pm **Opening of Art & Booth Exhibits**
- 3:00 pm **Snacks**
- 3:30 pm **Inspirational Talks**  
Dr. Tierry F. Garcia  
Dr. Ariston G. Bautista  
Dr. Napoleon C. Ejercito
- 4:15 pm **PSO-HNS Clinical Practice Guidelines Ratification**  
Dr. Ruzanne M. Caro & Dr. Jose M. Acuin
- 5:00 pm **MOA Signing of Kalusugang Ear Nose and Throat (PSO-HNS and ULCH)**  
Dr. Natividad A. Almazan-Aguilar
- 5:30 pm **Dinner Lecture**
- 6:00 pm **Anniversary Dinner Ball**  
**Invocation / National Anthem**  
St. Luke's VSSC ENT Choir  
**Welcome Address and Cordial Greetings**  
Dr. Cesar V. Villafuerte Jr.  
**Cordial Greetings from PBO-HNS President**  
Dr. Abelardo B. Perez  
**DVD Presentation of the PSO-HNS Today**  
Dr. Peter R. Jarin  
**Special Presentation**  
St. Luke's VSSC ENT Singers  
**Toast**  
Dr. Natividad A. Almazan-Aguilar  
**Awards**  
Dr. Jacob S. Matubis  
  
• Recognition to Founders (Heroic 9)  
• Recognition to Past Presidents

### Presentation of the PSO-HNS Chapters

### Closing Remarks and Invitation to Dance

Dr. Felix P. Nolasco

### Live Band

### Masters of Ceremonies:

Dr. Ma. Teresa Villareal-Que  
Dr. Alberto Calderon

February 17, 2006 marks another milestone in our history as we celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at the Centennial Hall of The Manila Hotel. Join us as we pay tribute to the founding fathers who bravely fought and stood firm through the more challenging phases of the society's life.

This is also the most opportune time to reaffirm our commitment and uphold our mission as a premier specialty group on Otolaryngology.

The Kalusugang Ear Nose and Throat will be launched to stimulate awareness and provide basic education about common E.N.T. diseases among laymen. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I invite everyone to attend this historic event.



Natividad A. Almazan-Aguilar,  
MD, MSCLin.Epi  
President, PSO-HNS, Inc.

On behalf of the organizing committee of the Golden Anniversary Celebration, I wish to welcome all the fellows and guests to the 50th Anniversary of the PSO-HNS, Inc. This is indeed a very momentous occasion for our surgical specialty as we gather together to give honor to our "Heroic 9" founders and to all the past presidents of our society, as well as to remember and treasure the history of our organization as it traveled through the years.

May God bless the PSO-HNS! Mabuhay!



Cesar V. Villafuerte Jr.,  
MD, MHA  
Past President, PSO-HNS, Inc.  
Chair, Golden Anniversary Committee



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Standing from left to right:  
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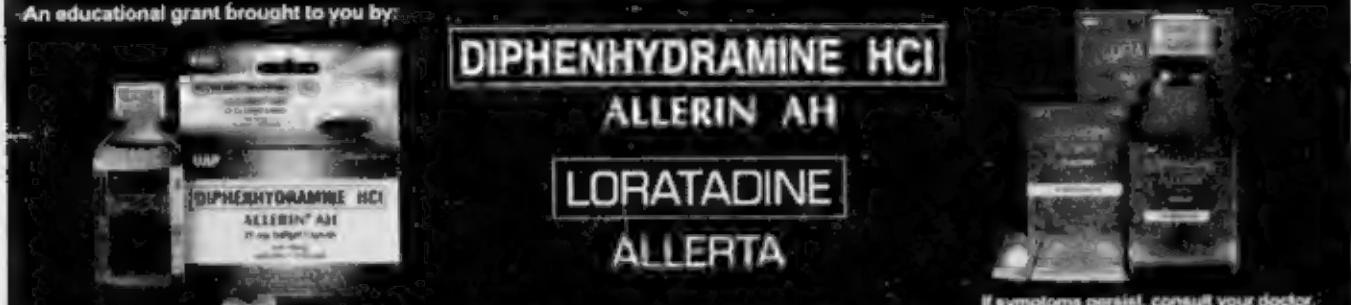
Sitting from left to right:  
Eutrapio S. Guevara Jr., MD, Abelardo B. Perez, MD (PBO-HNS President), Natividad A. Aguilar, MD (PSO-HNS President), Charlotte M. Chiong, MD (Vice-President) and Francisco A. Victoria, MD



From left to right:  
(†)Dr. Cesar Villafuerte Sr., (†)Dr. Vicente Songco, (†)Dr. Angel Enriquez, Dr. Napoleon Ejercito, (†)Dr. Macario G. Tan, Dr. Tierry F. Garcia

Other founding members (not in photo):  
(†)Dr. Antonio Vicencio, (†)Dr. Jose Antonio L. Roxas Sr., Dr. Ariston G. Bautista

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# Saddam goes on hunger strike

BAGHDAD—SADDAM HUSSEIN AND THREE former officials in his regime on Tuesday told the court trying them they were on a hunger strike in protest of the judge overseeing the proceedings.

Saddam said he had not eaten in three days, while his former intelligence chief, Ibrahim Barzani, said he had not eaten for two days. Two other defendants, Awad Bander and former Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, also said they were on strike.

Their claims of a hunger strike could not be independently confirmed. The defendants are being

held under US detention and US officials could not immediately be reached for comment.

But investigative judge Raid Juhu did not deny that the defendants were refusing food when asked about the strike. AP

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- TRAINING THE TRAINERS TO TRAIN February 18 - March 4, 2006 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT February 21 - March 21, 2006 Tuesday 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH February 22 - March 22, 2006 Wed. 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM
- INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS February 24 - March 24, 2006 Friday 8:00 PM - 9:30 PM
- SECURITY MANAGEMENT February 25 - March 11, 2006 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- WRITING THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING February 28, 2006 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- PLANNING, DIRECTING AND CONTROLLING SKILLS FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS February 28, 2006 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- HOW TO DELEGATE WORK AND ENSURE IT'S DONE RIGHT February 28 & 29, 2006 M-W 8:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- EFFECTIVE VEHICLE MAINTENANCE February 28, 2006 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

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# Iran defies West, starts enrichment work

VIENNA—IRAN HAS RESTARTED URANIUM enrichment work by putting its feedstock gas into centrifuges defying the West with a program that could make nuclear reactor fuel or atom bomb material, diplomats told AFP Monday.

It came as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad insisted his country was not worried about possible sanctions and Tehran said talks in Moscow aimed at finding a compromise to the long-running international standoff would not go ahead as planned later this week.

Uranium enrichment is seen as a red line by the United States and European Union in the dispute over Iran's nuclear program, as it is crucial to making atomic weapons.

Putting uranium hexafluoride (UF6) gas into centrifuges, which distill out enriched uranium, is a major escalation by Iran, and comes amid threats by the Islamic republic to withdraw from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In an interview published Monday, Ahmadinejad said that nations calling for economic sanctions would lose far more than Tehran.

"I believe those who want to impose limitations on us will lose more than us," he told

USA Today newspaper in an interview conducted Saturday.

Separately, Iran said Thursday's planned talks between Tehran and Moscow on a compromise to enrich uranium on Tehran's behalf in Russia, so that it would not acquire the strategic technology, would not go ahead.

Russia however said talks could still be held.

The United States and EU governments fear Iran's nuclear program could hide atomic weapons development, a claim strongly denied by Tehran which says it is for strictly peaceful civilian nuclear power.

Iran had earlier Monday said it would resume uranium enrichment even before the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meets in Vienna next month to decide whether to recommend UN Security Council action.

Meanwhile French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin arrived in Moscow for a 24-hour visit due to include talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Villepin said in an interview published Monday in a Russian newspaper that the international community was willing to negoti-

ate with Iran on the nuclear crisis if Tehran took steps to end the standoff.

But diplomats' comments in Vienna appear to show Iran is following through with its threat to carry out enrichment.

"Iran has put gas into centrifuges at its pilot enrichment plant in Natanz," one diplomat said.

The diplomat, who asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of the issue, said Iran had not yet fired up the whole 164-centrifuge cascade but had "over the past two or three days" started work with some centrifuges.

A second diplomat said Iran was doing "preliminary work" with "stand-alone" centrifuges, almost certainly putting uranium gas into single machines rather than a whole cascade.

The diplomat said this was necessary in a step-by-step approach involving first getting centrifuges running, then operating a pilot plant, which Iran has dubbed research work, and then moving on to industrial-scale enrichment with thousands of centrifuges.

Iran says it wants to produce low enriched uranium, which is not refined enough for weapons.

But it wants to install over 50,000 cen-

trifuges at Natanz, an array which could produce enough highly enriched uranium every two or three weeks for one atom bomb.

IAEA inspectors are Tuesday to visit Natanz, where Iran is threatening to remove surveillance seals and cameras, diplomats said.

But one diplomat said some seals and surveillance cameras would remain in place as they would be monitoring the production of nuclear fuel rather than enrichment.

Although Iran had suspended uranium enrichment work until talks with an EU negotiating troika broke down last month, it has since August been making the feedstock UF6 at a conversion plant in Isfahan.

The West has seemed ready to let Tehran pursue this work, which technically is part of the activities the EU says should be suspended, as long as it did not actually enrich.

The IAEA's 35-nation board of governors voted Feb. 4 to report Iran to the Security Council, but left a one-month window for diplomacy on getting it to return to a full suspension of enrichment-related work and cooperate more with IAEA inspectors. AFP



**CUPID-STRUCK**

Veiled Bangladeshi girls walk with flowers on Valentine's Day in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Feb. 14. Valentine's Day is being celebrated in this Muslim-majority, traditionally conservative country.

## Protests mar Haiti vote counting

PORTEAU-PRINCE—AN ERUPTION OF GUNfire left one person dead Monday in Port-au-Prince, amid protests over the result of Haiti's presidential election.

UN peacekeepers deployed around the Haitian capital, where crowds protested partial results that showed front-runner René Preval narrowly missing the 50 percent he needs to be elected president without going to a second round.

Television footage showed the lifeless body of a man wearing a bloodied T-shirt with the picture of René Preval, a former president who enjoys widespread support among the poor.

A UN spokesperson denied claims by demonstrators that a member of the 9,500-strong UN Stabilization Force in Haiti (Minustah) shot at protesters, saying the troops had only fired two shots in the air.

Spokesperson David Wimhurst said gunfire erupted after the troops had left the immediate vicinity of the incident, near Port-au-Prince's international airport.

There were also reports that several people were wounded.

At one stage, a small group of protesters hurled rocks at a Nigerian peacekeeper, who emerged unharmed and eventually managed to calm down the crowd.

Preval supporters used car wrecks, rocks and burning tires to block major avenues, paralyzing the city and causing businesses to shutter their doors.

The situation calmed down after word spread that Preval had flown in from his hometown of Marmelade. Preval held talks with UN Special Envoy Juan Gabriel Valdez at the airport before heading to the presidential palace to discuss the situation with interim President Boniface Alexandre.

Meanwhile, Brazil, which leads the UN force, asked the United States to organize a UN Security Council meeting on the new tensions in Haiti. The United States, council president for February, urged Haitians to respect the outcome of the elections.

Crowds gathered outside the headquarters of the Provisional Electoral Office (CEP) demanding that Preval be declared president immediately and claiming the vote count was fraudulent.

They also stormed the gates of the Montana hotel, where the CEP had announced partial results in past days. Demonstrators jumped into the pool of the luxury hotel, and danced on the tennis court, chanting "Preval president." UN helicopters landed reinforcements on the roof.

Former South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu urged the demonstrators to remain calm and leave the hotel, which they eventually did.

"You must show the world that you abhor fighting," the Nobel peace laureate said, speaking from a hotel terrace.



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## French doctors to study Joan of Arc's ashes

PARIS—FRENCH DOCTORS ARE TO study the ashes of the 15th-century maiden-warrior Joan of Arc, who was burned at the stake at age 19, in a quest for new insight into the extraordinary life of a young woman who became a national icon.

Philippe Charlier, the forensic scientist behind the project, told AFP that his team would spend six months analyzing relics said to be from her fire, including bone fragments, human tissue and wood.

By studying the relics' biochemical and molecular makeup, they hope to precisely date and authenticate them but also perhaps to discover new facts about the French military heroine made a saint by the Roman Catholic Church.

A combination of carbon dating techniques and analysis of pollen traces will allow them to pinpoint the relics' age down to the exact year and month.

"We will be able to say: these are the remains of a woman who died in Rouen (in northern France), aged 19, who died in 1431 around May 30, and who was burned three times in the same day," Charlier said.

If all of the above can be confirmed, he said, "we will know with near certainty that this is indeed Joan of Arc."

Born to a humble home in eastern France but inspired by what she believed to be divine voices, Joan of Arc (1412-1431) helped France to wrest the advantage back from England toward the end of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453).

Wounded in battle, she was captured and sold to the English, to be convicted of heresy and burned at the stake.

Joan of Arc's extraordinary destiny has been a source of fascination to French writers from Voltaire to the present day, who have re-created the Maid of Orleans, as she was known, as everything from a saint to the victim of a sinister Church plot.

Her claim to divine inspiration, and success in repelling the English invader, made her a potent symbol of the emergence of the French nation.

She later became a mythical inspiration for France's Catholic nationalists and has been controversially adopted as the emblem of Jean-Marie Le Pen's far-right National Front party, which celebrates her memory every year.

Charlier said however that he was driven purely by scientific curiosity and was unaffected by the tug-of-war over Joan of Arc's legacy.

"There is no nationalist goal behind this, no religious or political angle—it is just a scientific and historical investigation," he said.

Joan of Arc's ashes—preciously

guarded by a French historical association and currently the property of the Roman Catholic Church authorities in Tours, southwest of Paris—are the only remaining traces of her.

"In reality, we know hardly anything of Joan of Arc. We do not even have a drawing of her—except an outline sketched at the bottom of a legal document," Charlier told *Le Parisien* newspaper.

"Even the armor attributed to her is actually largely posthumous."

Initially a figurehead who revealed herself as a true military leader, Joan of Arc led the French armies in lifting the English siege of Orleans in 1429, the first of a chain of swift victories that ended with the French dauphin's coronation as Charles VII.

She was rehabilitated by the Catholic Church a quarter-century after her death, and canonized in 1920. *AFP*

**French Dr. Philippe Charlier displays the supposed remains of 15th century French heroine Joan of Arc, Feb. 13, in Garches, west of Paris. The barrage of tests led by Charlier could shed light on what are believed to be the remains of the 19-year-old, mainly bones and skin recovered from the fire that consumed her in 1431 in Rouen.**

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## New fish species, seaweeds found off Caribbean

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO—SCIENTISTS have discovered what they believe is a new fish species and at least 20 types of previously unknown seaweeds during a recent expedition to one of the Caribbean's most diverse marine areas—a coral-covered underwater mountain off the Dutch island of Saba.

It could take a year before researchers confirm the findings, which local fishermen, working with the Dutch Antilles government, are hoping to use to lobby authorities to steer oil tankers away from the Saba Bank Atoll to protect their livelihoods and the rich underwater life.

During their two weeks at the atoll, divers braved 12-foot seas to plunge 30 meters under water twice daily to collect marine samples. Their efforts turned up unique striped patterns on the seaweeds and one fish that researchers believe is new to science: a goby with orange spots.

"We were literally discovering a species every day that's truly remarkable," said Michael Smith, a senior research scientist at Conservation International, which funded the January expedition along with the Netherlands Ministry of Traffic and Water Management and Miami-based cruise operator Royal Caribbean's Ocean Fund.

"There aren't very many places where you can still do that in the Caribbean or very close to North America."

Not to be outdone by the fish discovery were the seaweed findings. Smith called the area "the epicenter of diversity for seaweeds in the Caribbean."

Mark Littler, a marine botanist at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, said his dives revealed landscapes that he compared to "mini rain forests." They swam through acres of red, green and brown seaweed—some that looked like ferns or were several feet high. *AP*

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Blast kills 4 US soldiers

KABUL—Four US soldiers were killed in a bomb blast in insurgency-plagued Afghanistan Monday as five militia troops contracted to the US-led coalition and an Afghan soldier also died in attacks, officials said. A purported spokesperson for the Taliban, removed from government in a US-led operation in 2001, claimed responsibility on behalf of the ultra-Islamic movement for the blast against the American troops. They were on patrol in volatile Uruzgan province with the Afghan army when their Humvee vehicle hit a suspected improvised explosive device, the coalition said in a statement. "Shortly after the attack, the patrol was engaged with small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire."

### 2 Kenyan ministers resign

NAIROBI—Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki on Monday accepted the resignations of two more senior Cabinet ministers implicated in massive corruption scandals that have rocked the east African nation. In a live televised address, Kibaki said Energy Minister Kiraitu Murungi and Education Minister George Sartori had asked to resign after having been named as players in the so-called "Goldenberg" and "Anglo Leasing" scams. "I have today accepted the request by (Sartori) to step aside from his responsibilities... to pave the way for investigations into the issues raised in the Report of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the Goldenberg affair," he said. *AFP*

### Man nabbed for Iraq abuse

LONDON—British military police have made an arrest in connection with a probe into video footage apparently showing British troops abusing civilians in Iraq, the defense ministry said Monday. A ministry spokesperson told AFP that the arrest was made Sunday "in conjunction with this investigation" but declined to say where it took place or confirm whether the person was a serving soldier. "The RMP (Royal Military Police) investigation into these extremely serious allegations is at very early stage," the spokesperson said. The ministry has ordered an "urgent investigation" into the video which aired on British television Sunday after the mass-circulation tabloid, *News of the World*, broke the story and showed photo stills from the video. *AFP*

**g: Cigarette smoking to your health**

## OPINION

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## Indivisible freedoms

**L**AST FRIDAY, A FUNERAL WAS HELD IN ROME FOR Fr. Andrea Santoro, a missionary priest killed the week before in Turkey. Camillo Cardinal Ruini of Rome announced at the funeral that he wanted to open the process for the beatification and eventual canonization of the priest. Santoro, he said, was a martyr. He was definitely a kind and pious man. Pope Benedict XVI ordered a letter Santoro wrote to him,

**EDITORIAL** on behalf of three Catholic women asking the Pope to visit their parish, published in *l'Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican newspaper.

In Turkey, the person accused of killing Santoro "admitted that he was driven by hatred aroused by the publication of the caricatures of Mohammed published in the Western press," according to one press account. The accused murderer was under the impression that Santoro was actively trying to convert Muslims to Catholicism. In fact, the Italian's ministry was to attend to small, isolated Catholic communities in areas that once comprised the Catholic settlements of antiquity.

While praising the Christian virtues of Santoro, and proclaiming his worthiness to be considered a martyr—proof of which would immediately result in sainthood—Vatican officials have been careful not to lay blame at the doorstep of Islam, whether as a religion or a community. The kind of misunderstanding that would lead a man to kill another, in the name of God, all because of a profoundly irreligious act that took place a very long distance away, is in a sense a parable for our times. Thornton Wilder, in his short novel "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," tackled a profoundly religious question. In the book, a monk named Brother Juniper witnesses the "finest bridge in all Peru" collapse, killing five people. And he asks, "Why did it happen to those five?"

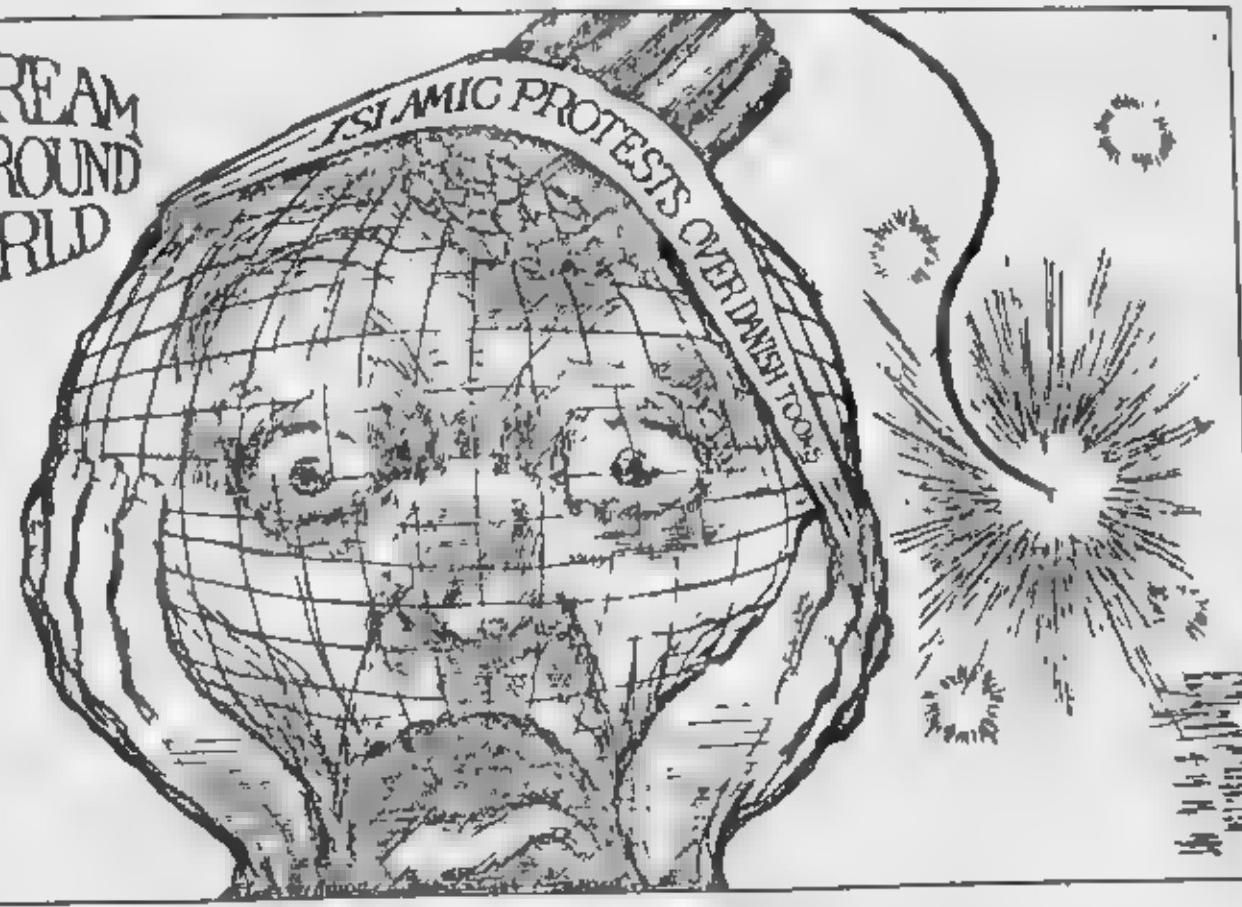
As a consequence of editorial cartoons being published in a Danish newspaper, the world has been asking the same question—in the Middle East, where, from Damascus and Teheran to Palestine and Baghdad, Muslims erupted in fury. Just as they did in Denmark itself, and all over Europe; and everywhere, from Pakistan and Indonesia to the Philippines, where Islamic communities are found. Days of anger and violence have resulted in the Islamic world engaging in soul-searching of its own. Yesterday, a meeting between the Danish prime minister and the leaders of Denmark's Muslim community led to calls on their co-religionists to "move on."

Excesses such as rioting and complications such as some irresponsible provocateurs inserting two cartoons (the most offensive ones) among the real cartoons circulated among Muslims aside, the Islamic world has been adamant about its belief that the Western press crossed the line. Non-Muslims have also observed that what the Western media attempted to paint as purely a question of freedom of expression was not that at all; it was a question of secular contempt for religious conventions.

While the Philippines adheres to the principle of the separation of Church and State, and indeed, the Philippine media are heir to a tradition of anticlericalism dating to the Propaganda Movement, as a whole, Filipinos are profoundly respectful of religious conventions. Even the bigotry of certain Filipinos toward their Islamic countrymen does not extend to flagrantly heaping contempt on their faith. There are lines Filipinos do not cross, and rightly so (if only we did not cross more of them than we already do).

Islam and Christianity both pay the highest tribute to martyrs. Even secular societies consider martyrdom possible in defense of country or ideology. The question is whether any kind of creed, including secularism as understood in the West, calls for provocations that make it inevitable for people to become martyrs, whether unintentionally or by design. While we do not counsel self-censorship arising out of fear, we do believe that a proper recognition of the central role faith plays in the lives of millions would go far to avoid undue provocation against people who take their religion seriously. After all, since World War II, the world has rallied to defend the Four Freedoms: of speech and expression; of every person to worship God in his own way; from want; and from fear. They all go hand in hand, and to raise one over the other diminishes them all.

## THE SCREAM HEARD AROUND THE WORLD



## What's a police community precinct for?

(Continued from last Monday)

**T**HE INTERSECTION ON COMMONWEALTH Avenue and Tandang Sora in Quezon City is a dangerous place to cross. Commonwealth slopes down here and vehicles coming from the Quezon Memorial Circle race down the incline as they battle for the commuters waiting for rides near the corner. There is a waiting shed farther up, but nobody uses it. There is a pedestrian lane and yellow boxes clearly marked on the pavement, but drivers pay no attention to them. They speed on as though in a race, and woe to pedestrians who happen to be in their way.

Even when there are traffic enforcers, they do not stop the vehicles to allow pedestrians to cross safely. Jeepneys stop right on top of the pedestrian lane, beside a big "Strictly No Loading/Unloading, SB" sign, to load and unload passengers. Barkers standing beside the sign call for passengers. The enforcers see all these but do nothing. The policemen in the police community precinct headquarters also see these but also do nothing.

The Metro Manila Development Authority tried to remedy the situation by constructing a pedestrian overpass across Commonwealth during the 2004 election campaign, with a big billboard announcing it to be a project of President Macapagal-Arroyo, complete with her smiling face. After the elections, construction was stopped and the billboard was taken away. The overpass remains unfinished and pedestrians still have to risk their lives when they cross the street.

I asked MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando about this, and he replied that he had suspended the construction because there were no more funds and also because the foot of the southern end of the overpass was in the wrong place. Commonwealth will be widened some more, he said, and the stairs going up the overpass will have to be moved nearer to the Mercury Drug Store and the KFC fast-food outlet.

Happily, there are signs that the widening of

## As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

Commonwealth in the area will begin soon and the overpass will be finished. Meanwhile, can't the authorities tell the police and traffic enforcers to enforce traffic rules and stop vehicles at the pedestrian lane to allow pedestrians to cross safely?

I asked Fernando why the police in the community precinct headquarters do not help maintain orderly traffic, and he said the MMDA has not deputized them. "Maybe we will," he added.

I posed the same question to top police officials and they replied that it is the duty of every policeman to help maintain traffic whether or not he is deputized by the MMDA. They promised to look into the matter.

That was weeks ago. Until now, there has been no change in the behavior of the police or traffic enforcers, whether they are the MMDA's Blueshorts or City Hall's Yellowshirts.

What is a police community precinct for if it cannot impose law and order in its place of assignment? Is this not the reason it was put there in the first place? If people see drivers violating traffic rules with impunity in the presence of cops and traffic aides, they are tempted to also violate traffic rules. They lose respect for the law and the police.

When the widening of Commonwealth is completed, I suggest that the two waiting sheds be painted in the trademark "Fernando pink" to make them more visible. Also there should be benches so commuters can sit down while waiting and either a rope or steel railings should be put up to make them fall in line. Two more waiting sheds, one on each side of the street, at the eastern foot of the flyover should be built.

But can't the police keep the vendors on the

sidewalk at the talipapa on Luzon Avenue so they don't spill out into the street and obstruct the passage of vehicles?

The jeepney terminal at the corner of Tandang Sora should be removed. The Tandang Sora jeepney route can run from Aurora Boulevard to Novaliches, thus making the terminals behind the University of the Philippines campus and at the Commonwealth corner unnecessary. And the "No Parking, No Loading/Unloading" rule should be strictly enforced.

MMDA Director General Arturo Lomibao, MM-DA Chair Bayani Fernando and Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte should visit the place incognito so they can see for themselves what's going on.

The two-day air talks between the governments of the Philippines and Bahrain will begin tomorrow in Clark Air Base. According to sources, the Philippines is prepared to give Bahrain all it is asking for—to the detriment of overseas Filipino workers, local business and industry, and our national aviation policy.

Bahrain is a tiny island in the Persian Gulf that hosts only 30,000 OFWs and produces only 1,800 tourists to the Philippines each year. But its appetite is very big. Its flag carrier deploys 61,000 seats to Manila per year and now wants to increase this to 107,000. At the air talks, Bahrain will ask that the present four flights weekly on the Manila-Bahrain route be increased to 10 flights. It has existing rights to fly to Cebu and Clark twice weekly but has never exercised those rights.

What should have priority is a new air agreement with Saudi Arabia, not with Bahrain. We have about a million OFWs in Saudi Arabia but Philippine Airlines announced a suspension of Manila-Riyadh flights because it has been losing on the route for decades. It has proposed instead a new Manila-Dubai-Saudi Arabia route. The Philippine air panel should concentrate on this instead of pampering the Bahrainis.

## Zombied

## THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quirós

reason is that, next to the Beatles and Rolling Stones, the Zombies were the United Kingdom's most important musical export in the 1960s. Two of the Beatles are dead, but Paul McCartney is still alive and kicking. So are the Rolling Stones, their concert in the United States last year being sold out months in advance. I doubt they can be brought over to this country soon, the cost probably being humongous. And I don't quite know if McCartney has forgiven this country for being chased out of it by a mob led by Marcos' henchmen, when the Beatles giggled here in the 1960s. So I thought the next best thing would be to watch the Zombies. Maybe the spark of genius was still there.

The genius was in sheer abundance when they first burst onto the scene in the mid-1960s. "Burst on the scene" is the only way to describe it. I recall somebody writing that the Zombies began at the top and worked their way to the bottom. "She's Not There" was an instant hit as well. Indeed as many of the other songs they wrote in the first flush of inspiration. They would suffer a dissipation of talent over the next two or three years and dim out like a meteor. But at the top of their form, they blazed so furiously they were being talked about as the group to knock out the Beatles in the pantheon of rock. Few other groups had the same range and versatility. Later Jim Morrison and Ray Manzarek would combine voice and keyboard to produce the music of The Doors. But well before them, Colin Blunstone and Rod Argent formed their own band and Blunstone joined other groups. The dissipation of talent became even more palpable, the songs passing on from classic to mediocre, from rebellious to conformist, from rock to karaoke. How could they have risen so high and fallen so low?

I understand that when they were no longer making hits in the 1960s, they began asking themselves what they were doing wrong, or at least what they stopped doing right. The answer was right there before them, in the Beatles and the Rolling Stones which would go on and break records in longevity. To this day, Mick Jagger and Keith Richards are still rocking and rolling. They did lose something, the Zombies, and that was the capacity to reinvent themselves, to subvert themselves. They became, well, zombies.

The last song they sang last Monday by way of encore was "How We Were Before." It begins: "Party's over, dawn breaking gradually through on us/ Shows us how we were before."

I kind of thought it was a fitting commentary to a lot more than the close of the concert.

I was in high school at the time, and I still remember the excitement with which we listened to the Zombies songs and tried to play



## OPINION

A15

## A frenzy of assigning blame

## ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



THE STAMPEDE AT ULTRA, IN WHICH 74 PEOPLE were crushed to death and up to 500 others were injured, has ignited a feeding frenzy in the media in search of scapegoats.

Two weeks after the tragedy, an immediate investigation launched by the government is still far from determining criminal responsibility for the loss of human lives; the proprietors of ABS-CBN, sponsor of the "Wowowee" show, after pledging that the network "would take care of all costs," have not come up with concrete offers of compensation; and a number of theories have been put forward to try to explain the disaster.

What seems clear, however, is that the explanations tend to spread the blame, like in fish trawling, over a wide area of explanations, including sociological or pseudo-sociology, tracing the tragedy to poverty, blaming the government, the victims, and, worst of all, the flawed Filipino culture of jumping the queue and fostering mendacity.

Historically speaking, the aftermath of the Ultra tragedy is no different than that of a long chain of previous disasters, including mudslides, flooding, marine disasters and forest fires, and fires in overcrowded discos (like the one in Quezon City several years ago). In all these, what has been predictable is the feeding frenzy of blame whose targets include government neglect, depredation of forests by predatory loggers, laxity in enforcing safety regulations.

No one, as far as I can remember, has been appropriately punished, and the most ridiculous compensation was the P10,000 awarded to each of the victims of the Ozone Disco, following a guilty verdict handed down by a Quezon City court for something like homicide or physical injuries due to "reckless imprudence"—one possible charge mentioned by the Department of Justice in the case of the Ultra tragedy.

The above outcomes make me cynical that the inquiry into the Ultra incident would turn out to be different. I regret to say that I am not equal to

the task of following all the convoluted theories advanced by a number of seemingly learned persons who have been invoking connections between the incident and the dynamics of mob psychology, "the damaged Filipino culture," and the responsibility of mass media—especially TV—in providing the public useful visual information other than mass entertainment, based on song and dance and corny ad libs and dialogue.

Sometimes one has to rest his mind from all the demands of going through complex explanations by those who appear to be learned. All I am interested in—and I suspect it is what the public wants—are simple results, like pinning direct responsibility for the sad episode so that the victims can be compensated and, more importantly, so that the tragedy will not be repeated, and making TV networks stop their cut-throat competition for ratings that forces them to cram crowds into virtual death traps.

It appears that in the course of blame-seeking, the tragedy has been seized by the government as an opportunity for settling political scores with ABS-CBN and used as an occasion by those holding strong political biases to grind their ideological and political axes.

There are a few straightforward facts that are being ignored in this frenzy to look for scapegoats. First, the venue of the ABS-CBN show can hold only 18,000 people and twice that number had gathered trying to get in. The overcrowding was a recipe for disaster. The potential for stampede was aggravated by the fact that the program

provided incentives for panic: raffle tickets that offered up to more than P1 million worth of prizes to be distributed to a few.

There was a stampede for those limited number of tickets. In that excited atmosphere, a little commotion could spark a stampede, even a riot. In a stampede, any expectation of orderly behavior is an idle wish. To trace the stampede to the disgusting Filipino behavior of jumping the queue is to exhibit flatulence. Blaming our "damaged culture" for some spontaneous outbreak of disorder is stretching theory too far. Please, let us leave our theorizing to academic seminars.

Gratuitous is the lame excuse of ABS-CBN program managers that it was only giving the crowd "what it wants" and that the lottery was a public service that gave "hope" to the poor to gain a windfall so they can "escape poverty." Impressionistic evidence suggests that most of the fans of the program don't go there for the contents. Many go there for the chance to hit the jackpot. The same incentive is offered by the lotto and sweepstakes.

Hope is not an original explanation. The great lover Casanova is credited for initiating the lottery. He sold the idea to the French king that lottery was a good way to bolster state revenues to finance wars. When asked by the skeptical king how it would work, Casanova said, "Hope, sir."

The finding of the investigation of the government task force that the crowd was "exploited, manipulated and treated like animals" does not explain the stampede. It was a conclusion prompted by self-defense that instantly shifted the blame to ABS-CBN, which has not always been friendly to the administration.

The flak was not slow in coming. There were those who immediately blamed the Arroyo administration for not doing enough to alleviate poverty. So, the poor had to die in the stampede for a chance to grab some windfalls.

The first lesson we learn from this stampede is that blame is interminable.

## Romance at a certain age

## AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



FOR WOMEN OF A CERTAIN AGE, ROMANCE doesn't come like rain showers—frequent and unexpected—but rather like a stream in the desert, you have to look for it and when you find it, you have to make the most of it.

Just the other night, my husband and I were getting ready for bed and he started complaining about a bruise on his knee, wondering when and how he got it. I took a look at it and said: "It's just like the one I have," showing him a similar dark spot on my knee. "It comes from pressing our knees against our dining table," I explained. Our new table, if you must know, comes with benches instead of chairs, and we've both taken to putting our feet up whenever we eat, our knees pressed against the table for balance.

My husband took a look at my bruise and marveled: "Wow, didn't you know, we have the same spot in the same part of the body. I like that!"

It was the most romantic line I'd heard in ages.

As you can guess by now, one's definition of romance evolves as one ages. I never thought so when I was younger, but you do arrive at the stage in life when the conventional expressions of romance—roses, chocolates, jewelry and serenades—actually seem sappy and cheesy, love expressed as clichés, uncreative and predictable. Nowadays, I much prefer simple, practical expressions of love, gestures and actions that don't necessarily come with Hallmark card sentiments, but are far more eloquent.

I MAY have thrown a surprise party for the hubby on his 50th birthday, but he topped that some years ago when I arrived from a month-long fellowship in the United States and found that he had secretly enlarged and renovated the master bath. We had talked about redoing our narrow and cramped bathroom for years, but I never thought that while I was away, he would spend his bonus money on a home improvement project.

He swore the kids to secrecy, and when I called a few days before my trip home, asking him what he wanted for pasalubong, he told me to bring home red bath towels. They turned out to be the finishing touch for our new bathroom, which he had furnished with a gleaming new

red bathtub. I walked into the house and was led directly to the master bath, and in the next few days, I would make every excuse to enter the bathroom, basking in my new, surprise gift.

My sisters and cousins in the States, hearing about the surprise that awaited me upon arrival, nearly swooned at the news. (Again, women our age swoon over bathroom renovations, not roses and champagne.) "Mabuti pa si Pie," they would sigh.

But my brother-in-law had a message for him: "Please tell Pie not to do something like that again, we're beginning to look bad to our wives!"

BUT our husbands can't renovate bathrooms every day or even every year, and as the years roll on, even just holding hands in public seems beneath your dignity. For women of a certain age, and a certain inclination, romance must then be sought for, grasped wherever and whenever they can find it.

For me and a widening circle of friends and family, romance comes by way of "Koreanovelas," the same serials that air over local channels but which we watch by way of DVD sets with English subtitles, to be followed at our own pace and at leisure.

Whenever my family starts ragging me about my current obsession over "Koreanovelas," I retort that each of us has our own obsessions but I never say anything about their fishing and saxophone playing, their Ipod downloading and fan fiction writing. "I don't get on your case, so get off mine," I warn. "You should be thankful I don't go ballroom dancing and employ a dance instructor," I throw in, though I must say that I don't think there's necessarily anything wrong with hiring men to dance with you.

WHICH gives me an idea. I had initially toyed with asking my family to use the theme from the musical "Rent" for my funeral, but the old lady's request is tempting. Imagine going to meet your Maker with the romantic themes from your favorite serials floating in the air, images of the "spoony" Yonsama escorting you to the Afterlife.

If our husbands had any good sense in them, they would take this as a broad hint. We may protest that romance no longer holds any practical attraction for us, but like finding a stream in the desert, when you find the waters, you want to jump in and refresh yourself. Even if only on the small screen.

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"Lete and Juan Luna also played a game. It was an excellent contest wherein Mr. Luna was able to display his Italian thrusts to advantage and his moves which were very effective. Mr. Lete of the Circulo Militar is a student who, with the equalities he has and his interest in the art, can be a good player."

The above could very well have been written by our sports writers, but their task today is made simpler because fencing bouts are not only captured on video that can produce instant, slow-motion replays but the fencers are now wired with computerized equipment that shows hits, misses and the line of a foil.

At the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution in 1896, the Luna brothers opened a fencing school in their home on Calle Alix in Sampaloc, Manila, and we have photographs of them in action, teaching their students the French and Italian styles of fencing. In the Lopez Museum, we have some watercolor drawings by Luna showing the different fencing movements.

Fencing is a thing of the past, the weapon, unlike a gun, a sign of a more polite and civilized age.

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## Sexuality

I SPENT PART OF VALENTINE'S DAY CORRECTING MIDTERM EXAMS, but it wasn't that bad, considering that the exams were for a Soc Sci 3 course, "Exploring Gender and Sexuality."

That's a new general education course open to all undergraduates. It was the product of almost four years of planning, involving people from different fields: the social sciences, medicine, communications. I had to shepherd the course proposal through UP's bureaucratic maze for over a year and a half, and then organize workshops, including one with Catholic and Muslim theologians, to fine-tune the course with the teaching staff.

But, some of you might be asking: Do we need a "sex course"? Aren't we already saturated with enough "sex talk" in the mass media? Sex is all around, from the idiot box at home to the towering billboards along main thoroughfares.

Yet, it is precisely because of this massive assault that I think we need something like the Soc Sci 3 course, especially when you see how, as the mass media become more sex-saturated, people seem to end up knowing less about sex.

## Dangerous myths

To make my point, I thought it would be worthwhile sharing some of the stuff coming out of the exams, misconceptions that seem incongruous with this age of information. Mind you, some of the students are juniors and seniors.

There were students who still believe menstruation expels "dirty blood." One student said menstruation was there to "get rid of eggs." Another wrote that menstruation "rids the female's body of her 'old' egg cell that was not fermented."

On family planning, there were students who still cited "rhythms" as a reliable method. On the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, several said condoms don't work because they have holes through which viruses can pass.

I could say that these misconceptions are to be expected from innocent young students, but I suspect many of those myths are actually quite widely held among older adults as well, who in fact teach young people these myths. I worry because these myths can be dangerous, putting young people at risk for unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

How does Soc Sci 3 respond to these problems? As I told the students on the first class, the course is not a sex education class, at least not in the traditional sense. We've learned from the mistakes of population education classes in high school, boring classes with boring teachers (themselves often scared to death by the prospect of talking about sex) and boring visual aids that make the reproductive organs look like aliens from outer space.

We've learned, too, that the last thing we needed was a moralistic course that preached about sex as sin. The idea of menstrual blood as dirty tells us, too, about how we look at women as "dirty," even polluting (many religions still forbid menstruating women from entering religious places). I have also noticed how students and their older relatives use words like "committing" sex, which betrays a general view of sex as dangerous and sinful.

We've also been conscious about the need to drop another type of moralism that sometimes emerges with gender courses, which do exist in UP and many other Philippine universities. Although well-meaning, with the intention of raising students' consciousness about women's oppression, these courses run the risk of promoting another kind of moralism with its focus on problems such as sex trafficking and violence against women, and a tendency toward male-bashing. One teacher in Mindanao handling a gender course told me recently that she was gently chided by superiors because she had asked students to look at "sexy songs." That, they told her, was not something to be discussed in a gender course!

## Beyond sex

The needs are tremendous, and we need to respond by relating sex and gender to sexuality, and how it permeates our lives. We do this by weaving the discussions about sex and sexuality into the human development cycle, from fetal life to old age. That includes talk about biomedical aspects, but in a way that helps students to understand the changes going on in their own bodies, from their libidos to pimples, from their menopausal mothers' mood swings to lolos' mellowing.

The sessions on reproductive biology inevitably bring us to family planning, and here I am amazed at the knowledge gaps. What strikes me, in particular, is the lack of awareness of natural family planning and its difference from rhythm or the calendar method. I'm realizing, too, that many young people use the calendar method to prevent pregnancies.

We talk too about psychosocial development, including reminders that sexuality comes into our lives quite early, whether we're prepared or not. During one lecture, I noticed how the class suddenly fell silent, really silent, as I talked about how we need to prevent sexual abuse of children, with a warning that the perpetrators are most often people the child already knows and trusts, including relatives. "Teach your children," I told them in no uncertain terms, "that no one, absolutely no one, has the right to touch their bodies, without their permission, and that this is done only in certain contexts, like help with a bath."

## Healthy and moral

The course is strong on gender, but in an applied way, bringing in culture, politics, history. We talk, for example, about how society demands female virginity, and go back in history to explain how this is tied to the way societies evolved (this is much too long for a column so I won't go into details). But after the historical review, students begin to understand why such demands are made. It's then easier to tell the students it's fine if women want to keep their virginity for their husbands, but that they should see their own worth as being more than a virgin. I do this for a very practical reason: several faculty members have noted how young girls sometimes "lose" (I explain that the term "lose" is itself loaded) their virginity to a smooth-talking boyfriend who declares his love (perhaps on Valentine's) and then think they're ruined for life. The result is that they then move from one boyfriend to another, thinking they're no longer worthy of anyone's "love" and "respect."

There's a lot of room for bringing in values and ethics, how we can be moral without being moralistic, as we challenge students to imagine a world where we can feel good, and healthy about sex and sexuality, about ourselves and about those around us, where "boy" and "girl" talk can go beyond, empty bragging about being the most beautiful, the most sexy, the most appealing, the best performer.

In the end, our faculty team hopes to give young people the tools for discernment to be able to see through the sweet talk of their boyfriends or girlfriends, the glamour and glitter of media celebrities and advertising, the rhetoric of politicians and religious leaders, so they can make informed decisions about sexuality and life.

## LOOKING BACK

Amber R. Ocampo



about the fencing techniques now prevalent because of the contest between the Luna brothers which ended successfully. It was the best item in the program. Antonio Luna and Llorente later played an exciting game. The responses of Mr. Luna were direct and rapid; his thrusts and his salutes showed his speed. Luna is a nervous player, energetic; Llorente, on the other hand, is a cold, poised and calculating player and a credit to his teacher Zuavo; he has firmness, he does not attack, he waits for the attacks, and then responds. He showed the makings of an excellent player. He is a fan of the game.

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# Urgent need to reorganize Philippine tourism industry

CERTAIN PERSONS CLAIMING TO speak on behalf of the tourism industry have been criticizing Senate Bill No. 2138, the Tourism Act of 2005. (PDI, 2/7/06)

It is alleged that there's no need to reorganize the tourism sector of the country. But what are the hard facts? Every single tourist brings in almost \$1,000. Thailand and Malaysia receive 12 to 15 million visitors a year, generating up to \$15 billion for their economies. Should we remain content with a target of 3 million arrivals and \$3 billion for 2006 while we panic in paying our foreign debt and stabilizing the peso?

Even if our tourism grew by 20 percent in 2004, this is still behind Asia-Pacific's 27 percent growth rate—it is as irrelevant as our economy growing at 4 percent or 5 percent when our neighbors are growing at 8 percent. Even with that growth, our hotels are fully booked and are charging very high prices because of intense demand.

In the last two decades, Thailand, Malaysia and other coun-

tries reorganized their tourism sectors. Today, they reap the benefits of that reorganization. Our proposals follow some of the reforms and seek to do even more.

We must regulate to offer a quality of service that is globally competitive. We must have a promotional effort that is well-funded and truly makes the world know the beauty of our country. We have to develop quality tourism zones quickly so that we can accommodate more and more tourists while preserving our forests, beaches and historical sites. We need to aim for 10 million tourists in 10 years.

On these and other core reforms, there is broad consensus within the industry. All the major players in the industry, particularly those responsible for inbound tourist traffic, were invited to and participated in our committee hearings and technical working group meetings. (There were 14 such hearings and meetings conducted by the Senate tourism committee over the course of a year and a half.) To this day, they continue to work with us in refin-

ing and polishing this bill. Indeed, we brought it to the floor of the Senate precisely to emphasize its urgency and to concretize the points of debate.

I can confidently say that only a few points of contention remain. But I am more concerned with the irresponsibility of certain people who speak out against the bill, utterly ignoring all the checks and balances that are built into it.

This is the first time that a national policy for tourism is even being seriously discussed in the halls of Congress. We are 10 years behind the global boom of tourism. Now is not the time to go back to committee level, because this bill should have become law 10 years ago.

We emphasize that where tourism advances, poverty retreats. Those who seek to impede its advance do nothing to solve the problem of poverty.

—SEN. RICHARD J. GORDON,  
Room 509, S/P  
Senate of the Philippines,  
GSIS Bldg., Financial Center,  
Pasay City



## No bad news if not for GMA

THIS IS REGARDING THE LETTER of Elaine Sarmiento. (PDI, 1/31/06) It's true that there are lots of good things happening in our country today, but there are plenty of bad stories, too, for which reason we, Filipinos, should stay ever vigilant. We should thank the people who are ready to risk their lives just to keep the public informed of what the greedy and immoral politicians are doing.

She said that "her" President is trying her best amid all the political bickerings? Trying her best to do what? To stay glued to her stolen throne, that is.

Is she saying that the bishops and the likes of former Sen. Jovito Salonga and all the people asking for the truth, people deprived of their rights, are chauvinists? Let me say that all the bickerings are of her own making. There wouldn't be any if Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo hadn't suppressed the truth by barring her minions from telling the Filipino people the truth behind the Hello Garci scandal. There is no one to blame for all our troubles now other than Sarmiento's President. She is the one who started the confusion we're in now.

We Filipinos are peace-loving people. Edsa I proved this. But how can we have peace when there is no justice, when our hearts are bleeding, when our pride has been shattered, and our stomachs are burning with hunger?

Peace be with Sarmiento!  
—REYNALDO TAHUM,  
tahumreynaldo@yahoo.com

## Yes, zero-waste mining is possible

ZERO-WASTE MINING IS EXACTLY what it connotes—mining without waste, and yes, it can be done.

Mine tailings, or mine tailings, are the leftover minerals thrown away after the sought-after metals have been retrieved from the crushed ore. These mine tailings, which in the majority of cases contain cyanide, possess a vast potential to devastate the environment. If we put to good use the mine tailings produced in mining operations, destructive mine spills will be a thing of the past.

Mine tailings are nothing but pure sand—a very valuable construction raw material. By simply adding the right amount of cement and coarse aggregates, which abound in any mining site, hundreds of pre-fabricated concrete products—from simple pavement tiles to concrete bridges—can be manufactured.

The possibilities are endless, limited only by one's imagination.

Even cyanide can be recycled, or to be more technically precise, regenerated. Through a process called AVR (acidification-volatilization-regeneration), cyanide in waste water can be transformed into its gaseous state and recovered as concentrated cyanide solution, which can be used again and again in the metals-recovery process. The cost of cyanide is the single biggest expense in gold processing, and its recovery and re-use make a lot of

sense for mining operators and for the environment as well.

At the end of mining operations, when cyanide solutions have to be finally discarded, the solutions must first be detoxified. Cyanide can be destroyed by treating the wastewater with small amounts of hydrogen peroxide, sulfur dioxide, ferrous sulphate or calcium hypochlorite—all very common reagents available everywhere (mercury is no longer used at large mining operations).

Zero-waste mining could cost mining operators a few thousand dollars, but this cost can be more than offset by the elimination of the tailings dam, the mere construction and maintenance of which could run into millions of dollars. In addition, tailings dams are prone to accidental ruptures which could cause environmental damage of horrific proportions.

Mining does not necessarily destroy the environment. Mining can help conserve the environment by providing the government and the people the wherewithal to do so. The wealthiest nations in the world are the ones who learned to make intelligent use of their natural resources while simultaneously protecting the environment with equal vigor and determination.

—ROD PADRIGON,  
mining engineer,  
rod\_padrigon@yahoo.com

## Focus anti-poverty on poorest regions

IN ADDITION TO LEW EDWARDS' proposal, as to where officials of the Arroyo administration can find the poor (PDI, 1/23/06), Foodfirst Information and Action Network (Filipino) Philippines is also recommending that the P35 billion anti-poverty fund that has been set aside by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo be spent in regions where there is a high incidence of poverty.

The worst-placed among these regions (out of the country's 17) are Region 13 (Caraga), 54.2 percent; ARMM, 53.1 percent; Region 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula),

49.4 percent, Region 5 (Bicol), 48.4 percent; and Region 4-B (Mindanao), 47.9 percent. (2nd Philippine Report on the Millennium Development Goals)

If the government is serious in making a difference in the lives of the poor, then it should focus on these areas. These areas might not be vote-rich or they might not have delivered big votes for GMA, but they are areas where hunger is really massive. The government should also prioritize projects that provide not only jobs but also long-term benefits to the communities.

—RAFFY REY HIPOLITO,  
policy advocacy officer,  
Foodfirst Information and Action  
Network (Filipino) Philippines,  
9-B Matulungin St.,  
Barangay Central, QC

It should avoid job-generating activities that are very short-term, like street cleaning.

It can concentrate on building classrooms, dikes, irrigation canals, among other things. This will enable the people working in these projects to have money to buy food. Besides, the projects are relevant to the needs of the villages.

—RAFFY REY HIPOLITO,  
policy advocacy officer,  
Foodfirst Information and Action  
Network (Filipino) Philippines,  
9-B Matulungin St.,  
Barangay Central, QC

## Politics not for Pacman

I HOPE THE POLITICIANS WILL not use the victory of Manny Pacquiao for their political ends, and I further hope that Pacquiao will not enter politics like Robert Jaworski, Freddie Webb, etc.

Politics is the science of good

government. If he insists on going into politics, he must take up political science first.

—LT. COL. JULIAN  
MALONSO, PA (ret.),  
92 New York St.,  
Cubao, Quezon City

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## For mining but ...

I WOULD LIKE TO REACT TO THE ARTICLE "Mining Act revisited" which appeared in the Talk of the Town section. (PDI, 2/5/06)

Benjamin Philip Romualdez and Juato Sarmiento argued for the "benefits of mining" in the country. While it is true that mining uplifts economies, they are wrong in saying that the kind of mining industry we have in the Philippines will propel our economy toward progress.

We have had many mining companies in the past that advanced the same argument. But where are we now? Have we progressed? Have come up with industries that mining could have spun out? Have the minerals they extracted in Northern Luzon, specifically in Benguet, helped improve the lives of the people there?

The truth is, people in Northern Luzon continue to wallow in poverty. And those once feasted on their resources are now gone.

I am not opposed to mining. I believe that it provides the necessary metals and minerals that we need in developing our industries. What I oppose is the fact that our country is not really benefiting from it.

First of all, the metals and minerals extracted here are brought in their raw state to the mother countries of mining companies. Secondly, mining does not really generate stable jobs. The jobs that mining generates are temporary, only good while the mining operations last.

We can only say that mining generates real employment if the industries that are supposed to spin out of mining, like automobile, jewelry, ship building, telecommunications, chemicals and the like spring up here. Are we producing automobiles here? Do we really have an airplane factory here?

The reality is, foreign mining firms serve as agents of their governments to get the minerals and resources they need for their own development and consumption. Foreign mining firms are here because they no longer have the mineral resources they need.

If they really want to help us develop, they should also build metal processing industries here.

But no, they want us to remain backward and dependent on their technologies because they want us to remain a source of profit. They take our mineral resources at very low costs, process them in their countries and then sell the finished products to us at much higher prices.

If we really want to develop and progress, let's not give our mineral resources to foreigners. What the government should do first is to support and help finance Filipino mining companies because no businessman would want our country to develop more than a countryman.

Second, support and encourage other Filipino businessmen to invest in industries that process mineral resources into finished products.

Third, help the retailers of these finished products by protecting the market against the flooding of the same products from other countries, and by vigorously campaigning to get our countrymen to buy our own products.

This way, we will achieve genuine progress and development.

—EDMUNDO R. BACATAN,  
153 Scout Rallos Ext.,  
Kamuning, Quezon City

# INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandarell  
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

## Indigenous peoples slam bio-prospecting



"COCA-COLA Time" by Ruel Bimuyag

By Maurice Malanes  
in Granada, Spain

**T**HE GENE TECHNOLOGY, WHICH THE INDUSTRIALIZED world sees as the "wave of the future," may be something new. But for many indigenous and local peoples from five continents, who were in Granada, Spain, recently to help shape an international system on access to and benefit-sharing from biodiversity resources, it is just a new, sophisticated tool of the more powerful countries to replay older colonial ways of appropriating the resources of weaker countries.

"Through bio-prospecting, if not outright bio-piracy, proponents of the gene technology have been setting their eyes on our resources," Datu Victorino Saway of the indigenous Talaandig in Bukidnon told the INQUIRER.

"This (bio-prospecting) is all about exploiting resources as has been the case since the colonial era," he said.

Bio-prospecting is the exploration, extraction and screening of biological diversity for commercially valuable and biochemical resources

such as medicines or a certain gene.

Saway was among indigenous and local folk from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Latin America, North America and Europe who gathered in Granada on Jan. 30-Feb. 3 as one voice through the United Nations-accredited International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

They came to help intervene in the fourth meeting of the working group on access and benefit-sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

INDIGENOUS/A19

## Documenting disappearing rituals of the Cordillera

By Elizabeth Lolarga  
Contributor

**T**HEIR CONSTANT COMPANIONSHIP and commitment to documenting the rituals and disappearing traditions of the Cordillera have made many tribals mistake photographers Tommy Hafalla, 48, and Ruel Bimuyag, 26, as a father-and-son team.

In their two-person show "Hulin" at the Victor Oteya Community Art Space on the top floor of La Azotea Building on Session Road in Baguio City, ongoing until Feb. 28, Hafalla and Bimuyag refer to an Ifugao ritual performed to drive away rat pestilence of rice and illnesses in the community.

When a *hulin* is performed, Hafalla said, the men of the tribe look for a narra tree in the mountains and cut off its branches to make a *bulul* or *hugo*, the highest form representing hardship. Hafalla translated a *hugo* into "pan buddy" used for healing.

At the exhibit opening on Jan. 28, a *mumbaki* (native priest) chanted in Ifugao to support the photographers in their job of documenting the Cordillera culture so that it may not be misrepresented. The photos are mostly about rituals.

### Outstanding rushes

The two photographers met in Hapao, Ifugao when Hafalla was working as cameraman for Kidlat de Guia's film for Discovery Channel. De Guia's film focused on his father Kidlat Tahnik's mission of giving video workshops to residents of the province. Bimuyag was part of the workshop.

Hafalla said Bimuyag's video shots were different from the rest. His rushes and frames stood out. The older photographer learned that Bimuyag, an outdoors man, had been shooting also with a still camera and was keen on the medium.

Hafalla was just too willing to share whatever he knew with the young man who turned out to be knowledgeable about the culture not only of the Ifugao but also of the Mt. Province, Benguet and Kalinga since he has mastered playing their music. He can play the gongs and bamboo instruments like the *unguoyong*, *piv-piv*, *pakkong*, *bukkong*, *patang-og*, *tongatong* and *takitak*—all indicators of the richness of the highland culture.

### 'It has a soul'

Hafalla gave Bimuyag a roll of black and white film while they were attending a *begnas* (a community rice ritual) in Sagada. Bimuyag discovered that black and white had "more value. It has a soul." He was hooked.

When Bimuyag, a tourism graduate of the University of Baguio who left a stable job at a travel agency to be a full-time photographer and choreographer of cultural performances, had his first solo show, Hafalla allowed him to use his dark room. Now Bimuyag has his own.

Sometimes, they would cover the same event together like the *sedy*, a community healing in Sagada. Only selected people could attend this ritual, and the two felt honored to join the tribals in trying to appease spirits guarding the community.

Their *sedy* series took place last year when there were a lot of people being felled by strokes and one house was deliberately burned down when spirits possessed the owner.

Bimuyag's touch of wit could be seen in "Coca Cola Time" which showed tribal leaders in a moment of respite, passing a bottle of Coke Litro.

The men had just finished a 15-km walk called the *libot* within the perimeter of Sagada. At the final station, a sacrificial pig was killed, and the villagers donated food to the leaders, a social obligation called the *tanbo*. Among the donated items was a bottle of Coke.

In his other photo "Rain Dance," Bimuyag showed rain pouring on the day of the *begnas*. While the men were gathered around the bonfire in the *dap-ay* (gathering place for elders), the women, holding up their umbrellas, began to dance and beat the gongs to feel warm.

Bimuyag heard a shout of blessing in the middle of the dance to mean that it was acceptable for the women to play the gongs.

Paano naga ba magtayo at magpalago ng NEGOSYO

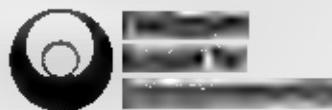
Admission is free.

"Sana may Go Negosyo Entrepreneurship Summit at Expo na noong nag-uumpisa pa lang ako mag-negosyo. Baka hindi na sana ako papalit-palit ng negosyo. Kahit kasi medyo kumikita ang mga negosyo itinayo ko, parang parating kulang pa rin. Buti na lang noong itinayo ko ang Reyes Haircutters nasagap ko ang konsepto ng franchising! Maliban sa magandang quality, gupit sa mababang halaga na handog namin sa mga customers, malit lang na kapital ang kailangan para makapag-franchise at malaki ang chances para magtagumpay! Noong una 20 naga lang ang pangarap kong branches pero ngayon may 200 branches na kami."

Kaya halina kayo Alamin ang advantages ng franchising. Huwag palampasin ang pagkakataon na matuto, magtayo at paunlarin ang inyong sariling negosyo. Punta na sa Go Negosyo Entrepreneurship Summit at Expo!"

Entrepreneurship Summit February 23, 2006 • Every Nation Leadership Institute, Fort, Taguig  
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### DAY 1 (February 23, 2006 / 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

PCE Recognition of Outstanding Entrepreneurship Teachers / Students / Programs by PCE • FORUM 1: Building National Confidence and Optimism To Inspire More Successful Filipino Entrepreneurs - Moderators: Rico Hizon & Anna Marie Periquet. Panelists: Socorro Ramos, Hon. Jose Concepcion III, Dr. Rolando Hortaleza, Atty. Felipe Gozon, Vivienne Tan, Henry Lim Bon Liung, Rodriguez Rivera, Marni Prieto\*, Grace Glory Go • LUNCH BREAK TDPC • Feng Shui Master Charlie Chao's Business Outlook • FORUM 2: A Global Market Beckons The Filipino Entrepreneur - Panelists: Dennis Mendoza, Dr. Paco Sandejas, Guillermo Luchango, Ben Colayco, Menardo Jimenez Jr. • FORUM 3: Uncommon Heroes for the Common Good - Panelists: Dr. Justin Arboleda, Francisco Colayco, Ray Gapuz Jr., Rina Lopez Bustiza\*, Dyan Wilki, Gerry Germonio\* • Breeding The Entrepreneurial Mindset and Culture By Ray Mandhayn • FORUM 4: New Approaches in Entrepreneurship Education - CULMINATING FORUM: Triggering the Age of Entrepreneurship in the Philippines - Panelists: Sec. Arthur Yap, Sec. Estrella Alabastro, Chairman Carito Punio, OIC/Secretary Fe Hidalgo, Undersecretary Zoraida Amelia Asanzo, Executive Director Gondeling Amata, Gov. Luis Raymond F. Vilariuerte, Linda Wirth\*, Johniu Kee, Prof. Josephine Agustar

### DAY 2 (February 24, 2006 / 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Opening Ceremonies Cutting of Ribbon: VP Noli de Castro, Sen. Manuel Villar, Sen. Manuel Roxas II, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Cong. Wilhelmino Alvarado, Mayor Rosendo Capco, Mayor Freddie Tinga, Government Officials, Partner Organizations - International Workshop on Technopreneurship - Conducted by Prof. Patrick Chan • HOST DOST - Franchise Your Business An Option for Growth - By Philippine Franchise Association • The Entrepreneur Know Thyself By Lex Ledesma • Finding Your Opportunity of a Lifetime Where do Entrepreneurs Get Their Ideas - By Jay Bernardo • Moving Innovations to Market By Mac Arroyo • The Essentials of a Successful Business Start-up - By Joel Santos • FORUM: Financing Programs that Work - Moderator: Mai Bolante - Panelists: National Livelihood Support Fund, Personal Bank Loan providers, ABS-CBN Bayan Microfinance Foundation, Pawnshops, Cooperatives • Safeguarding and Optimizing Your Intellectual Capital - By Intellectual Property Office

### DAY 3 (February 25, 2006 / 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

The Franchise Boom: Now Is the Time to Get Started by Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. • International Workshop on Technopreneurship - Conducted by Prof. Patrick Chan • HOST DOST - Franchise Your Business An Option for Growth - By Philippine Franchise Association • The Entrepreneur Know Thyself By Lex Ledesma • Finding Your Opportunity of a Lifetime Where do Entrepreneurs Get Their Ideas - By Jay Bernardo • Moving Innovations to Market By Mac Arroyo • The Essentials of a Successful Business Start-up - By Joel Santos • FORUM: Financing Programs that Work - Moderator: Mai Bolante - Panelists: National Livelihood Support Fund, Personal Bank Loan providers, ABS-CBN Bayan Microfinance Foundation, Pawnshops, Cooperatives • Safeguarding and Optimizing Your Intellectual Capital - By Intellectual Property Office

Final list of speakers for confirmation

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# Across the NATION

Text us your feedback: inquirer@inquirer.net/globe/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart). Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

# GMA OKS P128-B Cagayan flood control

**TUGUEGARAO CITY—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo has approved a 25-year master plan proposed by Cagayan Valley officials to control floods in the region.**

The President, who attended a joint meeting of the Regional Development Council and the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council here on Monday, said she would agree to the proposed P270-million initial rehabilitation fund for the region, provided there were counterpart funds from local governments.

The master plan would need

P128 billion to implement, according to regional officials.

Ms Arroyo also approved the 25-year reforestation program in the region's watersheds as a complementing activity for the desilting, rechanneling and dike construction in Cagayan Valley's major rivers and tributaries.

She said the Japan Bank for In-

ternational Cooperation had been offering loans due to the government's prompt repayment.

"Where is the source of loan? JIBC. We have to identify the flood control program and mitigation programs ... and once we put [these] in place, we have to borrow money because there is a need," she said.

Cagayan Gov. Edgar Lara said his province lost at least P1 billion in crops when it was hit by floods recently.

Agricultural losses in Isabela also reached P1 billion following

floods in December last year and January this year.

"Cagayan alone [recorded] P1 billion in crop damage. Cagayan Valley has lost P2 billion worth of agricultural crops," Lara said.

He said at least six water-impounding dams should be built in Cagayan to contain floodwaters, aside from proposed dams in Nueva Vizcaya and Ilagan and Mallig towns in Isabela.

The Cagayan River can contain only 2,000 cubic meters per second and excess water from it causes massive flooding in various towns

of Cagayan and Tuguegarao City so there is a need for building water containment dams, which will also be used for irrigation," he said.

Ms Arroyo asked Gunersindo Lasam, regional director of the Department of Agriculture, to coordinate with local government officials in raising their counterpart funds for small water impounding projects and communal irrigation systems.

Tuguegarao Mayor Randolph Ting said the Magat Dam in Ramon, Isabela, and its tributaries are the main culprits in the massive flooding in this city and in

low-lying villages of Cagayan.

Tobacco farms in some parts of the Ilocos region were also reported to have suffered at least P100 million in losses as a result of recent rains and typhoons.

Many Isabela towns went under water when flood recently swept the province as a result of continuous rains.

The flooding was blamed on denuded mountains and lack of environmental protection in forests. Villamar Visaya Jr. and Estanislao Caldes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

## Senate, House to probe Semirara spill

By T.J. Burgonio

**A PANEL OF THE SENATE AND the House of Representatives is flying to Semirara Island in Antique on Saturday to look into the extent of the damage of the massive oil spill off the coast of the island, Sen. Pia Cayetano said yesterday.**

Cayetano said the panel would look deeper into reports

by the University of the Philippines-Visayas and the Philippine Coast Guard that the fuel had already seeped into the island's seabed.

The panel is composed of Cayetano and Rep. Nereus Acosta (1st District, Bukidnon), co-chairs of the Congressional Oversight Committee on Clean Water, and Sen. Edgardo Angara, who filed a resolution calling

for an inquiry into the spill.

Lt. Commander Joseph Coyne, PCG spokesperson, estimated that some 175,000 cubic meters of soil under the mangroves had been contaminated by the fuel that had settled under water after sitting on the surface for too long.

The size of the contaminated soil was established by Jun Bailesteros, a hazardous materials specialist from UP.

A power barge of the National Power Corp. ran aground 200 meters off the shores of Sitio Bobog, Barangay Semirara in the island on Dec. 18, causing a massive oil spill that had contaminated 112 hectares of mangrove forests.

Cayetano, who also chairs the Senate committee on environment, said the inquiry would be expanded to cover the plight of residents, particularly fishermen and shell pickers who are suffering from the spill's effects.

### IN THE KNOW

#### WHAT LIES FOR MANGROVES?

A 2002 study on the impact of oil contamination on mangroves by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States said mangroves are highly susceptible to oil exposure.

Oil may kill them within a few weeks to several months.

Mangroves that are contaminated by oil may suffer yellowed leaves, defoliation, and tree death.

The more subtle responses include branching of *pneumatophores* (a specialized structure developed from the root in certain plants growing in swamps and marshes, serving as a respiratory organ), failure to grow or produce seeds, decreased canopy cover (the layer of leaves, twigs, and branches of trees) or increased rate of mutation, and increased sensitivity to other stresses.

## Floods, rains force evacuation of 4,000 from 15 Leyte villages

By Jani Arnaz and Jhummer Napalacan  
PDI Visayas Bureau

**SAN FRANCISCO, SOUTHERN Leyte—More than 4,000 people have been living in evacuation centers here after floods spawned by non-stop rains hit 15 villages in San Francisco on Panaon Island, Southern Leyte.**

Some 1,099 families or 4,612 persons started packing their bags and left their homes on Saturday when the water level started to rise.

They lived in mountain villages near the river and the rains had brought them back bad memories of the 2003 flash floods and mudslides that left 150 people dead.

San Francisco was among the three towns affected by the tragedy. The others were San Ricardo and Liloan.

The evacuees were temporarily housed in the town gym, parish center, Sangguniang Bayan session hall and schools.

The affected barangays were Santa Paz Norte, Santa Paz Sur, Tinaan, Kahayag, Jabey, Tuno, Gabi, Dakit, Punta, Bonggawisan, Sabang Ubos, Central, Marayag, Sudmon and Pinamudian.

In Liloan, some 100 families, who were isolated for three days due to flooding, had been evacuated. Some stayed at the Liloan Central School in the town proper while others opted to stay with their relatives, said Liloan Mayor Mario Maamao.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lleras was supposed to conduct an aerial inspection and distribute additional food supplies to Panaon Island on board a helicopter from the Philippine Air Force.

The PAF based in Mactan Air Base in Cebu sent a helicopter to Maasin City.

But Lleras said she did not pursue the plan to conduct an aerial

inspection because of the bad weather on Panaon Island.

She said that while the weather in Maasin was fair, rains continued to pour in Sogod town going to Panaon Island.

Lleras said she wanted to see the extent of damage in the provincial roads in Liloan, San Francisco, San Ricardo and Pintuyan towns, on Panaon Island.

Meanwhile, the three persons from Cebu who were earlier reported missing surfaced at the evacuation center in San Francisco on Monday night.

The three, who were working on the waterworks system of the town, were all from Viladolid in Carcar town, Cebu.

Godofredo Pansit, 50, said he and his co-workers were staying at their bungalow on Wednesday night in Sitio Tunggo, wanting for the rain to stop.

But the rain continued to pour, prompting his co-workers—Motises Lawas, 46, and Paulino Vasquez, 30, to decide to go to the poblacion, 7 km away.

He said he decided to keep an eye on the materials for the P13 million water works systems that his firm was constructing.

On Friday, Pansit said his two workers fetched him and wanted to take him to the town proper, so they could stay in the evacuation center.

But they got lost along the way due to the swelling of the Tunggo River. They finally made it to the town proper on Monday or three days later.

Incessant rains also affected nine towns in Southern Leyte mainland, prompting the provincial government to place the province under a state of calamity.

Lleras said the total damage caused by the landslides and floods on crops, infrastructure and property could reach P100 million.



**PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**  
GUAGUA, PAMPANGA

February 10, 2006

### INVITATION TO BID

**PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) WITH OFFICE ADDRESS AT SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA IS PRESENTLY IN NEED OF INTERESTED ELIGIBLE BIDDERS FOR THE SUPPLY OF SEVENTEEN (17) UNITS SUZUKI VEHICLE (CUSTOMIZED), FOUR (4) UNITS SUZUKI VEHICLE (MULTI CAB) AND FOUR (4) UNITS SUZUKI VEHICLE (4 WHEEL DRIVE).**

You are therefore invited to submit your bids/proposals in the PBAC and participate in a sealed bidding on February 23, 2006 (Thursday). 10:00 A.M. at PELCO II Board Room San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representatives. Late submissions and/or incomplete bid documents shall not be accepted.

REQUEST FURTHER TO INCLUDE IN YOUR SEALED BIDS/PROPOSALS ASIDE FROM THE BID AMOUNT, THE TERMS OF PAYMENT THE BID BOND IS EITHER IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TWO AND ONE HALF PERCENT (2 1/2%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE OR SURETY BOND (W/G.R.) EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE ALL BIDDERS ARE REQUESTED TO BE AT PELCO II BOARD ROOM AT EXACTLY 10:00 A.M. TO SECURE BID DOCUMENTS (FOR PROPER SPECIFICATION OF VEHICLES), ACCREDITATION AND FURTHER CLARIFICATION PLEASE CONTACT OR VISIT PBAC CHAIRPERSON MS. ANA LEA N. NARCISO, TEL NO. (045) 900-0611 OR MR. NEIL S. ISIP (045) 901-0884-65

LATE SUBMISSION OF BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. THE PBAC HAS THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS. WAIVE ANY INFORMALITY IN THE PROPOSAL RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT SUCH MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) ANA LEA N. NARCISO  
PBAC Chairperson



Republic of the Philippines  
**DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT**  
Km. 5, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City  
Tel # 221-9400

### Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The Davao City Water District with the Approved Budget for 2006 intends to apply the sum of (P1.6, see Item 2) being the Approved Budget for the Contract ABC, to payments under the contract for JANITORIAL SERVICES AND SECURITY SERVICES. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The Davao City Water District now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for:

<b>SECURITY SERVICES</b> in various DCWD facilities for a period of one (1) year	ABC for one (1) year contract: Php. II, 187,744.00
<b>JANITORIAL SERVICES</b> in various DCWD offices for a period of one (1) year	ABC for one (1) year contract: Php. I, 146,960.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/proprietors, organizations with at least thirty percent (50%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (RA 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (CA 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check as described in Section II of the Bidding Documents (ITB), The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsible Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Davao City Water District and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 am up to 5:00 pm.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of

<b>SECURITY SERVICES</b>	P12,000.00 PACKAGE
<b>JANITORIAL SERVICES</b>	P15,500.00 PACKAGE

The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The Davao City Water District will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on MARCH 09, 2006 at 8:00 o'clock A.M. for Security Services and 2:00 P.M. for Janitorial Services at DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City on the following schedule.

<b>SECURITY SERVICES</b>	March 21, 2006 @ 8:00 A.M.
<b>JANITORIAL SERVICES</b>	March 21, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address above.

7. The Davao City Water District reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District  
BAC-A  
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(Sgd.) VIRGINIA B. MARIBON  
BAC-A Chairperson

IPD-Feb 15 & 22, 2006

### INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

#### SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF TRAILER MOUNTED HYDRAULIC DRILLING MACHINE FOR DEEP WELL DRILLING (QUIRINO STATE COLLEGE)

The Quirino State College (QSC) invites all potential Bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Procurement of Trailer Mounted Hydraulic Drilling Machine for Deep Well Drilling, Quirino State College, Difun, Quirino.

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2006

## Across the NATION



# Court seeks custody of nursing exam results

By Carla P. Gomez  
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A REGIONAL Trial Court judge in Ililo on Monday ordered the Professional Regulation Commission and the Board of Nursing to place the board examination papers and answer sheets of 146 West Negros College (WNC) nursing graduates in court custody.

Judge Guille Delfin-Lim of RTC Branch 22 acted on a motion filed by nursing graduates who sued the PRC and the nursing

board for the release of their exam results.

The Ililo sheriff is scheduled to go to Manila to get the test papers and answer sheets from the PRC office, according to Nelia Gonzales, lawyer for the WNC nursing graduates and one of the petitioners.

The judge also directed the commission and the board to furnish the petitioners a certified copy of the report of PRC Regional Director Lily Ann Baldago, who recommended that the results of the petition-

ers' examinations be withheld.

WNC graduate Johnny Albarico and 45 others have also filed a petition before the Court of Appeals to compel the PRC and the board to release the examination results.

Another petition, filed by 127 other WNC nursing graduates, is also pending in the sala of Bacolod RTC Judge Philadelphia Agraviador, lawyer Leon Moya said.

The court is awaiting the reply of the PRC and the board to the petition, he added.

Capiz Rep. Predent Castro, in a privilege speech at the House of Representatives on Monday, scored Baldago for withholding the board exam results of the WNC graduates.

"It is truly lamentable to realize how the PRC, the Board of Nursing, and even the CHEd (Commission on Higher Education) become powerless as they all crouch before the vagaries of Lily Ann Baldago," he said.

The PRC and the board promised to expeditiously investi-

gate the matter involving the withholding of the examination results of the 567 graduates of the WNC, as well as the alleged "academic overloading," but until now no results have been presented, he said.

"In the meantime, the 567 poor and unfortunate nursing graduates of West Negros College remain clueless as to their future while their and their families' lives are suspended and continue to hang on the air of uncertainty," he added.

One of the graduates comes from Aklan, three are from Antique, four from Bohol, eight from Capiz, 35 from Cebu, 28 from Dumaguete, 122 from Ililo, 320 from Negros Occidental, and one from Southern Leyte, he said.

Castro called on Congress to investigate the case of the WNC nursing graduates.

He also urged the House to scrutinize "with its eagle eye," the budget of the PRC, the Board of Nursing, and the CHEd.

## ROUNDUP

**2 village officials shot dead**

DAVAO CITY—Communist rebels stormed a village in New Corella, Davao de Norte and executed two village officials, the military said Thursday. Jose Ma. Cuerpo, military spokesperson for Southern Mindanao, said an undetermined number of New People's Army rebels arrived in Barangay El Salvador at about 6:30 a.m. Wednesday and seized barangay chair Loreto Cabuga, who was forced to lead the rebels to the houses of Councilors Bartolome Cabuga and Raul Jatton. The two were executed on suspicion that they were behind the organization of an anti-communist vigilante group.

Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

**2 nabbed for marijuana**

COTABATO CITY—Police arrested two suspected pushers on Monday while they were repacking marijuana inside a house on Pansacala Street here. Senior Insp. Samson Obatay, chief of the city police's special operations group, identified the suspects as Arwan Samparedo and Soa aman Ombal of Barangay Rosary Heights. Seized from them were five sachets of dried marijuana, drug paraphernalia and cash.

Charlie Salfase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

**Ex-bank employee shot dead**

COTABATO CITY—A former employee of a MetroBank branch here was shot dead by suspected car thieves after the victim refused to let go of his newly acquired motorcycle on Monday night, police said Tuesday. Senior Insp. Samson Obatay, chief of the city police's special operations group, said Wahesa Arsa, 32, a former Metro Bank clearing officer, was shot along Gonzalo Jayler Street in Barangay Rosary Heights 7.

Charlie Salfase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

**Laguna rural bank robbed**

TANAJAN CITY—Four unidentified men ransacked a rural bank in Sta. Rosa City in Laguna on Feb. 9 and took away P500,000 in cash. Sta. Rosa police chief Supt. Florendo Sallgao said the robbers, who pretended to be clients, went inside the Cabuyad Rural Bank in Barangay Baibigao at 2:10 p.m. Shortly after, they announced a hold-up and disarmed the bank's lone security guard. They locked up the four bank employees and the guard inside the cash vault. The robbers escaped in a tricycle.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

**Artists' show in Legazpi**

LEGAZPI CITY—The city government through the Commission on Bicol History and Culture, on Monday launched a four-member show titled "Langis, Tinta at Bato" and a book launch by Bicolano writers. A one-stop shop for new books on "Bicol" and/or "Bikol" writers was also set up at the Legazpi City Museum at the City Hall compound. The art exhibit, which will run until March 10, features the works of four Bicolanos in celebration of National Arts month.

PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



VALENTINE'S GIFT

It's a perfect Valentine's Day affair for 135 couples who wed by the beach in Hundred Islands, Alaminos City in rites officiated by the city's mayor, Hernani Braganza.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Chlorine sent to flooded Surigao towns

By Bert Pacate  
PDI Mindanao Bureau

TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR—The provincial health office has ordered the distribution of chlorine to various town centers in the province to combat water contamination caused by recent floods.

Dr. Cesar Pagaran, provincial

health officer, said some residents had fallen ill after using contaminated water.

Records from the Adela Ty Memorial Medical Center showed that at least 50 people had already been treated for gastroenteritis and other waterborne diseases since the floods hit the province last week.

"Hundreds more may have

gotten sick due to contaminated waters. But we have little way of finding out. They could not go to health centers and hospitals because roads and bridges are not accessible," Pagaran said.

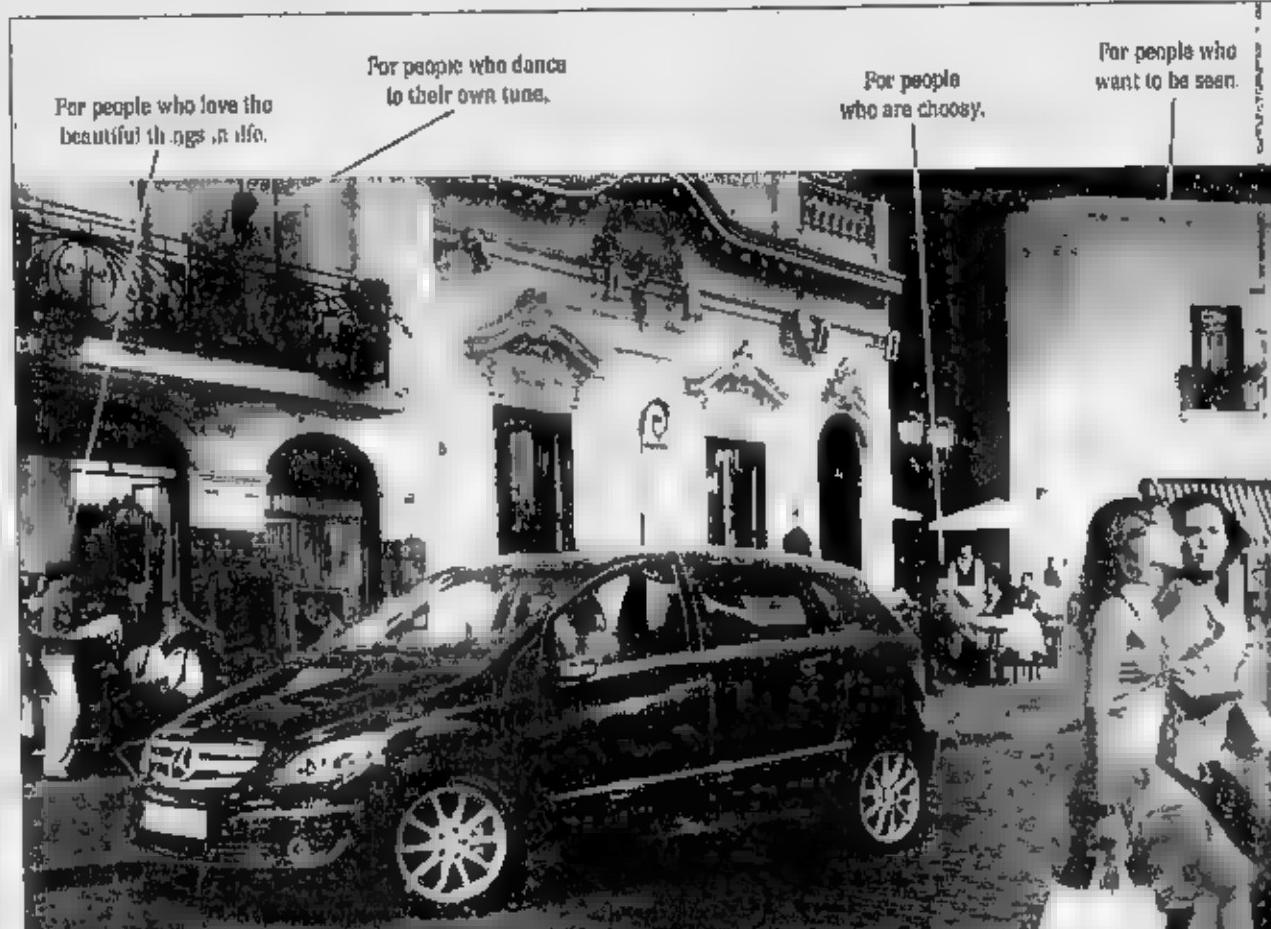
Gov. Vicente Pimentel Jr. asked Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. for immediate assistance.

In 2004, illegal recruiters collected nearly P4 million from 463 victims, he said. But last year, the number dropped to 411.

Domingo said the number of illegal recruitment cases also dropped to 136 in 2005 from 148 in 2004.

Most of the cases were settled out of court, he said.

"Also, some of the cases did not prosper because the victims were threatened," Domingo said. July Quirós, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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From page A17

Some 450 participants from governments, UN agencies, indigenous and local community groups, the academe and industry attended.

Born out of the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in Brazil, the convention, which has 188 parties, aims "to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources."

Some countries, like the Philippines, instituted in recent years some bio-prospecting agreements to help regulate bio-prospecting

**Bio-piracy**

But with the lack of public information and awareness about bio-prospecting, many source communities and countries cannot effectively monitor or enforce bio-prospecting regulations, if any, leading to bio-piracy or the outright theft of biodiversity resources, said the Canada-based Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration.

The industrialized world has the edge in gene technology, but it doesn't have the raw materials, much of which still abound in developing or least developed countries.

While states are seeking to establish an international system to regulate and govern access to and equitable benefit-sharing from genetic resources, cases of bio-prospecting and bio-piracy, mostly in indigenous and local communities, continue.

Saway, for example, cited the case of government researchers in 1995 who "intruded" into the Talaandig community to gather plant specimens without getting the consent of the community.

Fortunately, says Savay, the people have a customary protocol penalizing those who encroach into the community without the permission of elders.

As punishment, the government researchers were told to provide the community with eight carabaos, 26 chickens, eight square meters each of red, white and black cloths, and P150 in coins.

"[It] was actually the Talaandig people's way of asserting their right to self-rule," Savay said.

Other indigenous peoples have presented cases of bio-piracy by pharmaceutical firms linked with universities or governments, which targeted medicinal plants, including certain animals, whose traditional uses have long been part of indigenous folk knowledge.

Indigenous and local communities from various countries have thus pushed for an international system that will guarantee respect for their rights to their territories and resources.

Igorot leader Lourdes Amos of the Thailand-based Asian Indigenous Peoples' Pact stressed on the first day of the meeting a "rights-based" system.

Reading an IDP statement, Amos said any international system must respect and recognize indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and their corresponding right of permanent sovereignty over our lands and natural resources."

Amos said the right to "free and prior informed consent" and "the right to say no or deny access to our knowledge and resources" are subsumed in the indigenous peoples' right to self-determination.

MAURICE Malanes, a native of Kibungan, Benguet and PDI correspondent for Baguio-Benguet, covered the United Nations-accredited International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity held Jan. 30-Feb. 3 in Granada, Spain.

# Gov't raises La Niña alert

From page A1

Anthony Golez, deputy administrator of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), said the government was preparing the biggest flood mitigation plan that should be completed within six months. (See related story in Across The Nation on Page A18.)

## Switch crops

The Department of Agriculture has been tasked with immediately conducting an information campaign among the country's farmers to advise them to change the type of crops they would be planting this season.

Farmers, in eastern Luzon particularly, should consider switching to crops suitable to the predicted high rainfall in the coming months.

"In the Philippines, which is also experiencing the southwest monsoon now, you have a situation where there's too much water in the wrong place at the wrong time," Yumul said.

Pagasa climatology chief Flaviana D. Hilario said the weather bureau had been monitoring anomalies in the sea surface temperatures in the Pacific since October last year.

## Floods in the Visayas

From October to November last year, the Philippines experienced below normal rainfall. The cooling of the sea surface temperatures in the Pacific started in December.

From January to Feb. 12, some parts of the

Philippines received 300 times more than the average rainfall, triggering flash floods and mudslides in the Visayas and Mindanao, Hilario said.

Climate centers in Australia, Japan and the United States have also observed the La Niña conditions and predicted the phenomenon would continue for the next three to six months.

For an official La Niña event to be declared, the difference between actual and normal sea surface temperatures must be at least -0.5 points for a period of five months or until May.

Pagasa recorded -0.1 points from Jan. 15 to Feb. 11.

## 'Hardest hit'

Pagasa said the eastern seaboard of the Philippines would be hardest hit by the La Niña phenomenon. This includes Cagayan Valley, Isabela, Southern Leyte, Leyte, Agusan del Sur and Norte, Davao Oriental, Samar, Aurora and the Bicol provinces.

The OCD has reported 14 fatalities, one injured person and six people missing due to rains this year. Around 280,000 people or 57,000 families in 24 municipalities and seven provinces have been affected.

Some 5,700 families have also been evacuated, but many of them have decided to return to their homes due to the recent fair weather. With a report from David A. Hayes

LA NIÑA, LITERALLY "THE LITTLE GIRL," IS A TERM USED by meteorologists to describe unusually cool sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean. Changes in atmospheric pressure in the Pacific, calculated by comparing air pressure between Tahiti and Darwin, Australia, are also linked to La Niña events.

Its four major effects are flooding, soil erosion, storm surges and strong winds.

It is the opposite of El Niño ("The Little Boy") which is characterized by unusually warm ocean temperatures and results in less rainfall and fewer tropical cyclones.

One of the most destructive typhoons during the La Niña phenomenon in 1998-99 was Typhoon "Norming." It struck the Visayas on Dec. 12, 1998, leaving 17 people dead, 24 missing and P247 million in damage to crops and property.

Environmental watchdog Greenpeace said the 1982-83 El Niño, considered the strongest in the 20th century, claimed some 1,500 lives and cost the world economy more than \$8 billion.

The Philippines lost some \$450 million. The output of agriculture, fishery and forestry dropped 8.6 percent due to drought in the first half of 1998 and strong typhoons later that year.

**Floods (December 2005 to February 2006)**

## First week of December

• Oriental Mindoro is hit by flooding due to heavy rains. Hundreds of families are evacuated. Flooding intensifies before Christmas, displacing thousands.

• Heavy rains force over 12,000 residents from at least 14 villages in Lucena City to evacuate to safer ground as

floods continue to rise.

• Four bridges in Capay Valley are closed due to floods, families start to leave their homes. Rivers in Isabela and La Union swell, swamping four bridges.

• Two weeks of incessant rains trigger floods in six villages in Palo town, Leyte, affecting over 8,000 persons.

## Dec. 17

Typhoon "Quedan" hits southern Luzon, including Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon, and some parts of the Visayas, including Aklan, Iloilo and Capiz. Six are reported dead and thousands of families are evacuated.

## Dec. 23

In Zamboanga del Norte, a farmer dies following a mudslide and flash floods due to heavy rains.

## Dec. 24

Residents of six villages in Zamboanga City are evacuated after flash floods submerged their areas.

## Dec. 27-29

Provinces in Northern Luzon, including Isabela, La Union and Aurora, are submerged due to heavy rains.

## Jan. 25

Tropical depression "Agaton" causes floods in Isabela, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, Pampanga and Nueva Vizcaya. Three are reported killed. Millions worth of crops are destroyed.

## February

In Southern Leyte, seven people are killed due to a mudslide caused by heavy rains.

PDI Research

# GI in Sulu in hot water for shooting stray animals

From page A1

shooting stray animals that wander into his team's compound, according to a local report.

Rice has continued to shoot at stray animals despite repeated admonitions from officials of the Philippine Marine Battalion Landing Team (MBLT) 4, the report said.

"The 'casualties' were not identified in the report. But in the countryside, house pets like dogs, cats, chickens and ducks usually have the run of the place.

Ironically, the visiting US troops are soon to offer veterinary services as part of their civic projects in the area.

Reached by phone in Manila, US Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop said that the

mission was still looking into the reported animal shootings, and that "disciplinary action" would be imposed if necessary.

"US servicemen are operating under strict rules of engagement and rules of behavior, and if those rules are found to have been violated, there will be some kind of disciplinary action," Lussenhop said.

Only days earlier, the embassy said US servicemen taking part in Balikatan exercises this year were expected to behave like "informal ambassadors" of their country and to avoid any act that might "offend" Filipinos.

The conduct of visiting American troops has drawn closer scrutiny since the alleged rape of

a 22-year-old Filipino woman by US Marines on Nov. 1 last year at the Subic Freeport.

Four Marines have been prevented from returning to their home base in Okinawa and are facing trial in an Olongapo City court.

Debates over US custody of the four accused and over the future of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement are going on in Congress.

## On the beach

Rice was reportedly caught shooting at stray animals on Feb. 10 at around 7:45 p.m. on Sei Higad beach—where his unit had set up quarters—in Sei, Panamao, Sulu.

The soldier caused a ruckus as he "indiscriminately fired his issued firearm [at] stray animals entering their occupied compound," the report said, adding:

"It was not the first time that shooting happened."

The report quoted members of the 24th Marine Company under the MBLT 4, which also set up quarters on the beach, as saying that Rice himself frequently leads the shooting whenever stray animals enter the compound.

MBLT 4 officials reportedly admonished the Americans, saying that killing stray animals would "destroy the good rapport [they had] established with the residents in the area."

But Rice was "not heeding their advice," the report said.

The RP-US Balikatan exercises in Sulu are to open on Feb. 20 and run until March 5.

## Civic missions

To fend off criticism that US soldiers were interfering in local operations against terrorists, the Balikatan has in recent years integrated US civic missions into the military exercises to serve the local population.

The US advance party, which includes Rice's unit, launched their "civil military operations" in Sulu on Jan. 20.

Aside from medical and dental services, "limited veterinary services" are also to be provided dur-

ing medical missions.

## Valentine's Day march

Meanwhile, dozens of activists held a Valentine's Day march near the US Embassy to demand the revocation of the VFA.

Holding up red heart-shaped placards reading "US out of Philippines now," the marchers said the VFA was putting American troops above Philippine laws and failing to protect the Filipinos' interests.

"What the Filipinos have with the US is clearly a parasitic and abusive relationship—a relationship between unequal entities," said marcher Corazon Requizo.

With reports from Volt Contreras and AP

# Blasted hopes, broken dreams for 14 minors

From page A1

them before a juvenile court," said Director Marcelo Ele, head of the Anti-Illegal Drugs and Special Operations Task Force.

## Parents tested positive

The minors who will not be charged include those who did not test positive or were not found with drugs or drug paraphernalia, or were too young. Some were aged 7 and below. One was a 4-month-old baby whose mother had brought her child to the drug den.

That baby's mother was among six parents who tested positive for shabu, Ele said.

Police have turned 31 of the minors over to Pasig's social welfare unit. Only three of them were attending school.

The results of the drug tests on

the minors shocked social workers in Pasig.

## Young runners

Ele said those who did not test positive for drugs and who were not found to have drugs or any drug paraphernalia on them would be released to their nearest relative.

Ele earlier said that the youngsters were not customers but "runners" who were used to deliver drugs and other paraphernalia to the different stalls and shacks in the compound.

All in all, the raiders arrested a total of 319 people in the compound just a few hundred meters from Pasig City Hall and Pasig police headquarters.

About 200 adults facing charges are accused of offenses ranging from drug pushing, drug

use, illegal possession of drugs or paraphernalia, maintenance of drug dens, visiting drug dens and illegal possession of firearms.

The eldest among the adults was a 65-year-old man.

The discovery of the colony of drug addicts has led to the sacking of two dozen police officers, including Pasig police chief Senior Supt. Raul Medina.

Pasig policemen have also been subjected to drug tests.

Social workers said an environment where peddling shabu had become a primary way to earn a living made it easier for the children to get into drugs.

## Wrong values

"The values itself is lacking. They are developing the wrong attitudes," Delleva said.

Those minors who tested posi-

tive for drugs will be sent to rehabilitation centers. Those who tested negative, including a 16-year-old girl who is seven months pregnant, will be returned to their families.

But Delleva said social workers would have to check first if the relatives would be capable of raising the children.

"If the place is still detrimental for the minors, we will seek assistance from our head office for the possibility of bringing them to institutions," she said.

Declaring that President Macapagal-Arroyo "means business," Malacafang said the dismissal of 26 Philippine National Police personnel should serve as a warning to those who were not doing their jobs.

This showed the "firm resolve of the government to discipline errant

cops who fail in their duty to fight crime and protect our people," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

"The President means business."

Over dzRH radio, Ms Arroyo reiterated that the government would continue to break up drug dens in Metro Manila.

He also ordered the drug test-

ing of all city policemen.

"Some barangay officials told me that they were afraid of reporting drug pushers to policemen, fearing that some of these officers could be involved in drugs as well," Eusebio said.

## Medina's side

Senior Supt. Romeo Abaring has been assigned to take over the post of Medina.

"I have explained my side. I accept the decision," Medina told the inquirer.

Medina said his men had conducted several operations in the area, resulting in several arrests.

"The problem is many of the suspects would just post bail and quickly go back to (illegal drugs)," Medina said. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora

# OFW blew lid off secret 'shabu' flea market

From page A1

became unruly during a "session" in one of the 60 shanties inside the compound, and people beat him black and blue. He wanted to get even and continued to go to the place, not only to "score" but to observe, he said.

Once, he said, he saw uniformed policemen in the compound. They were apparently regulars because the other customers and merchants didn't mind them. Another time he saw a patrol car stop outside and somebody from inside handed money to its occupants.

The OFW said some of the regular customers apparently were from the moneyed class. One night, he saw luxury cars—a Mercedes Benz, a BMW and a Toyota Land Cruiser—parked outside. There were also big bikes.

## Hidden camera

The OFW sought out Erwin and told him everything.

"At first, I thought he was 'paranoid' because he was talking fast and couldn't be understood," my brother said. Wanting to get rid of the man, Erwin told him to just come back.

The OFW kept coming back. Exasperated, Erwin asked if he was willing to have a hidden camera installed on his person.

The camera was as tiny as a button, its eye as small as a needlepoint.

Bingo! When the OFW came back, he had a video of people selling shabu openly. In a second surveillance, Erwin sent his own TV crew. Again, the video showed

to complete the mission, I'll give it to you," Lomibao told Ele.

"It's a top secret mission. Only you, Mon, Erwin and I know about it at this point. If it leaks out, one of us did it."

Ele went to work. He asked if Erwin's cameraman, who was hiding the informant, could come and give him all the details about the place.

That same day, Ele and the cameraman flew over the compound, using a borrowed Air Force helicopter so people below would not suspect anything.

With the information gathered from the air and on the ground, Ele pinpointed the possible entry point and the areas where to deploy men to prevent an escape.

## Shootout feared

Mapayapa compound is about a hundred meters away from the city's public market. The place teems with people.

"This will entail a big operation," Ele said in our second meeting

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**METRO**

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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# Hope floats for minors in prison

By Michael Lim Ubac

DECLARING THAT "JAIL IS NO place for a child," the House committee on justice yesterday approved the comprehensive juvenile justice system bill which seeks to stop the widespread practice of integrating juvenile delinquents with hardened criminals.

If enacted, 70 percent of criminal cases against children will be dismissed outright while others will be referred to rehabilitation

programs, according to the Juvenile Justice Network-Philippines (JJNP).

Data from the JJNP, a broad coalition of government and non-government organizations pushing for the child protection law, showed that as of September 2005, about 4,000 minors "in conflict with the law" were in jail. Of the figure, 467 were in Metro Manila jails under the supervision of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. The figure did not

include those detained in police stations or under the custody of the social welfare department.

Most of them were charged with minor crimes such as petty theft, snuffing of glue or other solvents, vagrancy and violation of curfew hours.

The JJNP expects the proposed law to keep children with petty offenses out of jail, providing them with "child rights-based treatment."

Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Da-

tumanong, the committee chair, asked the plenary to fast-track the approval of the measure since an average of 10,515 juvenile delinquents are arrested and detained annually.

"Some 28 errant youths are placed under arrest everyday who, at their very young age, have already lost their innocence to the harsh realities of life," he said.

He added that House Bill No. 5065 was a product of "painstaking efforts" to reach out to "youth-

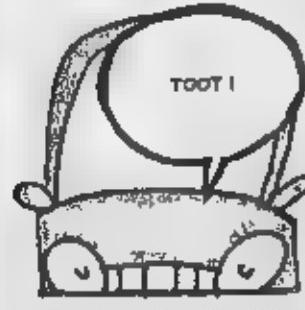
ful offenders who are hapless victims, too, of the cold and retributive criminal justice system."

Besides being treated as "social outcasts" at a very young age, the minors were exposed to greater physical and psychological harm, including sexual abuse, he said.

Datumanong said the proposed law took into consideration the best interest of the child as "its primordial principle" consistent with the ideals of the 1987 Constitution, the international standards

on relevant treaties, and human rights instruments which uphold the fundamental rights of the child.

One major feature of the proposed justice system is increasing the age bracket of those offenders exempted from criminal responsibility from 9 years old to 12 years old. However, offenders above 12 years old but below 15 years old, and those aged 15 but below 18 "shall be subjected to an appropriate intervention program."

**METROBRIEFS****No blowing of horns in 'Silent Zones'**

FIVE Quezon City councilors want public places like schools, churches and hospitals to be declared "Silent Zones" to stop passing motorists from blowing their horns or sirens and playing loud music. In a proposed ordinance, the councilors said the noise made by cars and other vehicles could be a distraction. A "peaceful and quiet environment" is conducive to teaching in school, worshipping in church, and treating patients in a hospital, they added. Under the proposal, first time violators shall be fined P1,000 or imprisoned for a month. Subsequent offenders shall be fined P3,000 or imprisoned for six months, or both, depending on the discretion of the court. The proposed ordinance was introduced by Councilors Resty Malangen, Rommel Abesamis, Eric Rey Medina, Francisco Caiay Jr. and Janet Malaya.

DJ Yap

**Accidental shooting, suicide or foul play?**  
 A POLICEMAN died after he was shot in the chest inside a hotel in Makati City yesterday. PO1 Al Francis Quirante Camba, 26, was rushed to the Makati Medical Center at 1:15 a.m. after a bullet pierced the right side of his collar bone. The shooting took place in Unit 1416 of the Prince Plaza, a condominium-hotel at the corner of Dela Rosa and Legaspi Streets in Barangay San Lorenzo, where Camba had spent the night drinking with his friends. The policeman, assigned to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Cobato City, was in Metro Manila to undergo training at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame. The Makati Police Department's Homicide Section is now considering three possibilities in Camba's death: Accidental shooting, suicide, or foul play. Senior Insp. Ma. Jasmin Almasa, Southern Police District Scene-of-the-Crime Operatives team leader, said Camba's companions would undergo testing to determine if they had fired a gun.

Tara V. Orismando

**Manila cops shape up**

**MANI**A—A policemen have no more excuse for being fat and out of shape. The Manila Police District (MPD) yesterday began its kickboxing and tummy trimming sessions as part of an improved fitness program for all law enforcers and civilian employees. MPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong said the program was aimed at getting all the district's personnel in shape so that they could run after criminals. "The MPD's fitness program is not only good for physical health but also essential in instilling professionalism, integrity and discipline," Bulaong said in a statement. "We believe that this fitness program could be considered as a key to crime suppression because it would eventually create a new breed of cops with increased strength and vigor," Bulaong added. The MPD had earlier signed a memorandum of agreement with the Philippine Council for Strength and Fitness Inc. (PCSF) to draft and initiate a fitness program suited for Manila policeman. PCSF officials earlier explained that the Manila policemen would be required to undergo Arnis self-defense training, weight training, police obstacle course activities, physical ability tests, fighting fitness for female members of the Special Weapons and Tactics team, bodybuilding, and a 12-week "extensive tummy trimming weight reduction system."

Margaux C. Ortiz

**Fiery Valentine's Day**

A FIRE hit a church in Las Piñas City yesterday, destroying P1-million worth of property. According to deputy fire marshal Aldwin Salazar, the fire began shortly after 10 a.m. In the caretaker's quarters beside the Las Piñas Evangelical Church on Daisy Street in Pilar Village, Barangay Talon Dos. "The caretaker's son, who was the only one left in the house, immediately ran outside when the blaze started," Salazar said, relating witnesses' accounts. Fire investigators have yet to determine the cause of the fire which later spread to the church, but said it might be electricity-related. The blaze was put out at 11:45 a.m., but not before it burned down the church altar and some musical instruments. No one was hurt or killed in the incident.

Jaclyn R. Uy

**2 hurt in Pasig accident**

TWO persons were injured when the debris from a concrete wall fell on them in Pasig City yesterday. Erlinda Florendo, 42, and construction worker Rolly Lubretto, 28, sustained wounds in their arms and knees. But another construction worker police identified as a certain Ricardo, was believed to still be under the rubble, as rescuers continued digging through the debris, as of press time. The six-meter wall attached to at least two houses at 195 Diaz Street in Barangay Plineda, leaned forward and almost collapsed at about 3:30 p.m. The excavation ran parallel to the ground where the concrete wall, attached to the houses of Nicander Atabie and Florendo's father-in-law Eduviges, was standing. The excavation, ongoing for more than two weeks, was one-meter deep and less than a meter wide, PCO Arman Valenzuela also said. Councilor Bobby Eusebio, who rushed to the area, said the old pipes were being replaced with new concrete pipes to improve the drainage system.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

**St. Theresa's College-Manila homecoming**

THE St. Theresa's College, Manila (STCM) homecoming will be held this Saturday, Feb. 18, at Pavilions A & B of the Wack-Wack Golf & Country Club in Mandaluyong City. Host class is Pearl Jubilarian HS '78. The oldest class is Double Platinum HS '31, to which the composer of the school song, Aurelio Carballo-Gonzalez, a.k.a. author Freda Jayme, belongs. For the first time, there won't be a silver jubilarian class, as the last batch to graduate, HS '80, marked the milestone last year. To be announced during the homecoming program is the opening in June of the Mother Redempta Pre-School, run by the STCM Foundation. There will also be an update on the Mother Redempta Fund, the service arm of the alumnae association. The homecoming starts at 3 p.m. For inquiries, call 740-1810.



BAGATSING

PROMER MANILA MAYOR RAMON D. Bagatsing died at 5:30 a.m. yesterday in his house at Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa. He was 89.

Bagatsing is survived by his wife, Juanta Hubria Sevilla, and children Rica, former Congressman Amado and Ramon Jr., Jesus, Manuel, Eduardo and Valentino.

Born on Aug. 19, 1916, in Fabricia, Sagay, Negros Occidental, Bagatsing led a colorful life as a Manila policeman, soldier and politician. He started his public career as a patrolman in the Manila Police Department from 1939 to 1941.

When World War II broke out in 1941, he enlisted in the US Armed Forces in the Far East to fight Japanese invasion forces. From 1957 to 1965, he served in Congress as the representative of Manila's third district. His term was interrupted when he joined the Cabinet as chief of the Presidential Agency on Reforms and Government Operations from 1967 to 1969. He ran again for his old seat in Congress, and was elected for a third term in 1969.

Bagatsing also served as mayor of Manila from 1971 to 1986. He survived the bloody Plaza Miranda bombing incident in 1972.

Bagatsing passed the bar in 1949 and obtained a Master of Laws degree from the University of Sto. Tomas in 1970. The former mayor was also chairman of the Manila Red Cross chapter and member of its board of directors, past national president of the Philippine Jaycees, Lions Club district director and international director.

He was the founder and benefactor of the Ramon D. Bagatsing Scholarship Foundation, Inc. which has given away more than 1,300 grants to poor and deserving students.

include those detained in police stations or under the custody of the social welfare department.

Most of them were charged with minor crimes such as petty theft, snuffing of glue or other solvents, vagrancy and violation of curfew hours.

The JJNP expects the proposed law to keep children with petty offenses out of jail, providing them with "child rights-based treatment."

Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Da-

tumanong, the committee chair, asked the plenary to fast-track the approval of the measure since an average of 10,515 juvenile delinquents are arrested and detained annually.

"Some 28 errant youths are placed under arrest everyday who, at their very young age, have already lost their innocence to the harsh realities of life," he said.

He added that House Bill No.

5065 was a product of "painstaking efforts" to reach out to "youth-

ful offenders who are hapless victims, too, of the cold and retributive criminal justice system."

Besides being treated as "social outcasts" at a very young age, the minors were exposed to greater physical and psychological harm, including sexual abuse, he said.

Datumanong said the proposed law took into consideration the best interest of the child as "its primordial principle" consistent with the ideals of the 1987 Constitution, the international standards

on relevant treaties, and human rights instruments which uphold the fundamental rights of the child.

One major feature of the proposed justice system is increasing the age bracket of those offenders exempted from criminal responsibility from 9 years old to 12 years old. However, offenders above 12 years old but below 15 years old, and those aged 15 but below 18 "shall be subjected to an appropriate intervention program."

## No more Fridays with Dr. Alfredo

By DJ Yap

THE PAST FRIDAYS HAVE BEEN QUIET AT the San Agustin Clinic in Quezon City.

There are no crowds waiting in line to get free medical attention for their ailments. Gone too is the good doctor who used to spend the whole day treating the poor and needy.

Dr. Alfredo San Agustin, who dedicated his Fridays for the past 40 years attending to the medical needs of the disadvantaged, passed away last Jan. 16 at the age of 74.

San Agustin, who succumbed to liver cancer, was cited as Quezon City's Most Outstanding Citizen in the field of medicine in 2004 for his commitment to serving the poor both as a doctor and citizen.

But while San Agustin may be gone, his mission will continue.

Gina San Agustin and Dr. Tess San Agustin-Rusch have decided to carry on their father's charity clinic also called "Thank God, It's Friday."

"We will continue his legacy," said Tess. "We have to look forward to the future."

On Friday, the clinic will once again open its doors to the poor for a medical mission from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 5-C Kamuning Road.

Operations at the Friday clinic were suspended early this year when San Agustin died. But his daughters have vowed to pay tribute to his kindness and generosity by continuing what he had begun.

"I was 4 years old when my Dad took me to a remote area in Quezon City, with a big box of medicine on his right shoulder and his other hand holding me," Gina recalled.

"Even when my Dad was all alone treating sick people, it was already a medical mission," she added. "We will take it from there."

San Agustin was laid to rest on Jan. 26. His family, friends and the people he had treated gave him a warm sendoff with prayers and a tribute.

Friday's medical mission will be conducted in cooperation with Solvay, a pharmaceutical company that will provide needed medical equipment, such as an electrocardiogram machine.

Dr. Ernie Capulong, a longtime family friend, and Dr. Marc Dy, a young physician, will also help provide medical care for the patients.

## Bagatsing; 89

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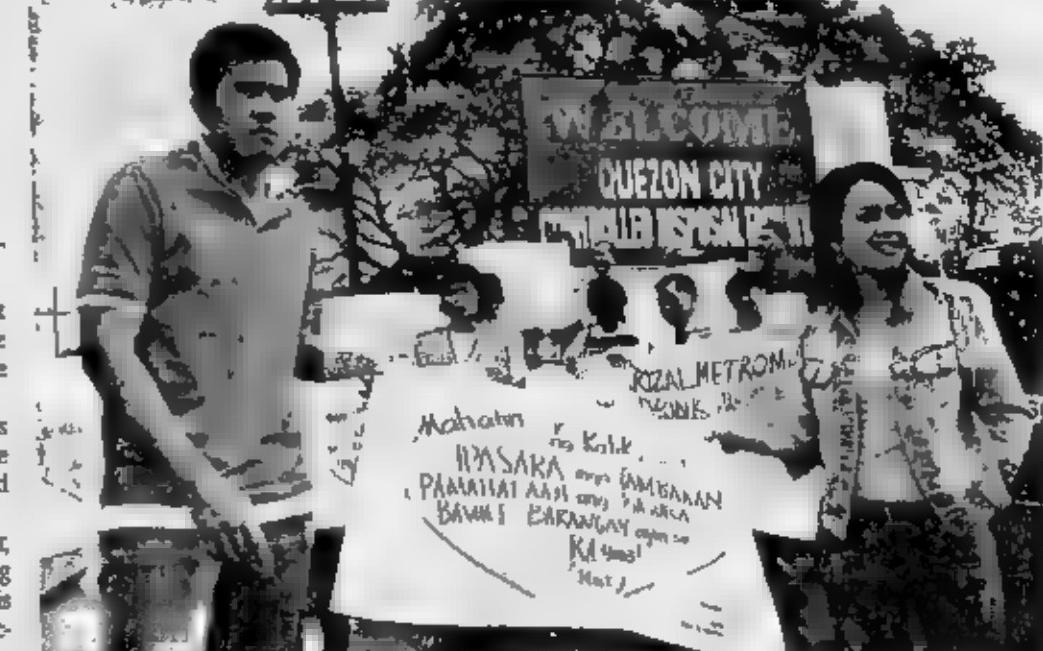
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"HOUSEMATES" Nene Tamayo and Bob de la Cruz, of a popular reality TV show, led a rally yesterday to call for the closure of the Payatas dump in Quezon City.

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# Painters ready for showdown sans Tangkay

GAME TOMORROW (See Andrus Gym)  
3 p.m.—Rain or Shine vs Magnolia (Game 5 Finals)

By Jasmine W. Payo

**CONTRARY TO PERCEPTION, RAIN OR SHINE coach Caloy Garcia believes the absence of Most Valuable Player Jojo Tangkay can turn the Painters' fortune around.**

"I think it's an advantage because now every-

body will step up and quit relying on him," said Garcia, whose Painters blew a 2-0 lead in the title

Tangkay will be missing the winner-take-all Game 5 of the PBL Heroes Cup finals after the league suspended him for committing his second unsportsmanlike foul.

Even if the Commissioner's Office turned down Tangkay's appeal yesterday, Garcia thinks the Painters have enough offensive options versus the Magnolia Wizards.

The youthful mentor cited young gunners Erwin Sta. Maria, Paolo Orbeta and Younis Aljarni to fill in the void left by the league's top scorer.

"I've talked to them and they committed that they will step up hard on Thursday," noted Gar-

Tangkay himself believes that the Painters remain capable of clinching their second straight crown and seventh overall title since joining the league in 1998.

Tangkay, who bagged his first MVP plum last week, punched Magnolia star Arwind Santos on the nose in Game 4 last Sunday.

In Game 3, Tangkay was also slapped with an unsportsmanlike foul after hitting Santos on the face.

The Painters seemed headed for a title sweep after winning Game 1 (70-68 in overtime) and Game 2 (75-73) of the best-of-five series. But the Wizards forged a do-or-die showdown by claiming Game 3 (80-70) and Game 4 (61-57 in overtime).

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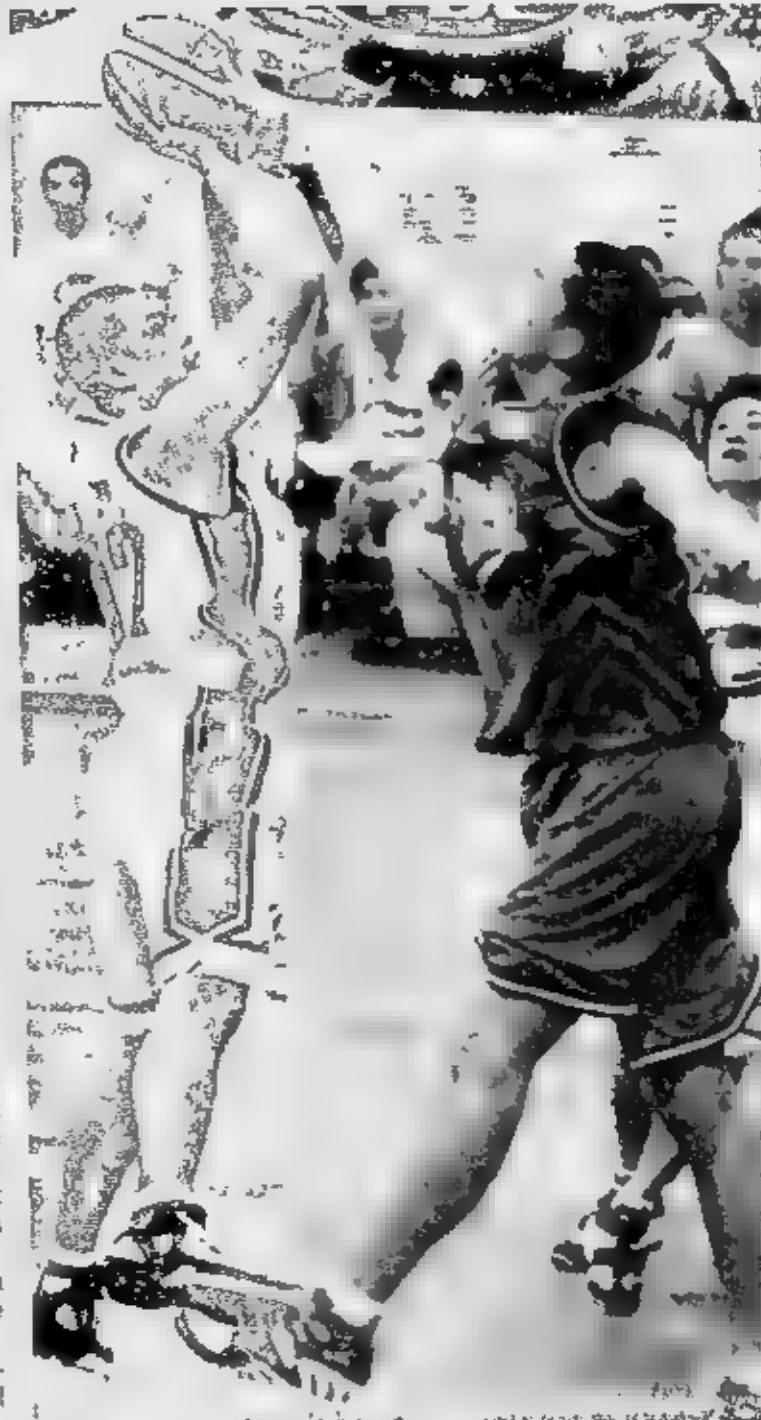
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MAGNOLIA power forward Mark Isip shoots off Rain or Shine's Marvin Ortiguela and Jay-R Reyes in Game 4 of the series.

EDWIN BACASMAS

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**SALE SITE**

**DAVAO CITY - THIS YEAR'S PHILIPPINE AIRLINES INTERCLUB, THE COUNTRY'S OLDEST GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP THAT HAD ITS BEGINNINGS IN 1948, HAS GARNERED BIG CORPORATE SUPPORT ONCE AGAIN.**

**Tournament chair Domingo T. Duerme said that the 59th Men's Regular Interclub and the 19th Seniors Interclub have attracted 14 major sponsors and nine other backers, attesting to the prestige and drawing power of the event widely acknowledged as the national clubs championship.**

**Acion Asia, Airbus, Boeing, GE Aviation, GMA 7, Honda Cars Davao, INQ7.net, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, Pagcor, People Asia, Premier Wine & Spirits, Rudy Project and UMBN are the major sponsors.**

**HERE'S A BIG POST-VALENTINE'S THANKS** to the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) for acknowledging the offer by the League of Provinces of the Philippines to lend them the noted Cuban boxing coach under their hire.

**Y**our reporter here had been tasked by Gov. Manny Pacquiao of North Cotabato to inform the Abap about the availability of Señor Honorato Espinosa, who won for his country its first Olympic gold in the 1972 Munich Olympics, to help prepare the RP national boxing team for the Doha Asian Games this year.

Pifol offered assistance after Raul Fernandez Liranza, the Cuban coach the Abap had been trying to rehire, failed anew to materialize at the airport.

**THANK YOU, THE ABAP** told Pifol, but they have other Cuban coaches in mind.

In a talk with our colleague Ed Picoson, the no-nonsense sportscaster, Abap president Manny Lopez was quoted as saying he would rather stick it out with his Filipino staff than try his luck with Espinosa.

The outright refusal was based on what the Abap chief described as Espinosa's lack of qualities (to coach the RP team), as quoted by Picoson in his column for the Manila Bulletin yesterday.

Said the Abap in a statement: "While we appreciate the comments and recommendations of people regarding who to hire as coach of the RP team, technically, the person that they are recommending does not fit our standards at present."

**THAT STATEMENT, BY THE WAY,** should also goad the Abap to new heights.

At least, they now appear certain on what should be done to regain winning form and to resume the hunt for the first Olympic box-

## PAL Interclub gets backing

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## San Beda, St. Benilde booters dispute title

**DEFENDING CHAMPION SAN BEDA GUNS** for its fourth straight title today when it meets rival College of St. Benilde in the men's football finals of the 81st National Collegiate Athletic Association at the ASCOM Football Field in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

The Red Lions finished with the best 2-0-1 (win-loss-draw) record at the end of the first round for seven points, while the Blazers swept the second round with a 3-0-0 card worth nine points to arrange the title showdown.

Gametime is 10:30 a.m.

The Taft-based St. Benilde squad is gunning for its first football crown since joining the country's oldest collegiate league in 1998.

The Red Lions and the Blazers split their elimination round meeting, with the former drawing first blood with a 2-1 win on Jan. 30. The Blazers took the second, 1-0, courtesy of striker Mark Ed Lusung's goal in extra time on Feb. 8.

The Mapua Cardinals and the Philippine Christian U Dolphins finished third and fourth, respectively.

In the juniors division, La Salle Green Hills tries to move closer to sweeping the elimination phase and a fourth straight title as it meets Philippine Christian U at 8:30 a.m. La Salle will face the SBC Red Cub for its final elimination game on Sunday.

## Moto Masters draws bets from 12 nations

**RIDERS FROM THE PHILIPPINES AND 11 OTHER COUNTRIES SEE ACTION IN THE 2006 MOTOCROSS MASTERS OF ASIA SET MARCH 16-19 AT THE PUERTO PRINCESA CITY MOTOCROSS RACETRACK.**

China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, Japan, Guam, Saipan, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines will be represented in the event.

The event will be held in Puerto Princesa for the third straight year and it is expected to top attendance of the past two editions where more than 70,000 showed up to watch.

Defending champion Glenn Aguilar banners the crack Filipino team, which will have the benefit of tune-up races starting with the Namissa Camel International Supercross championships in Bacolod this weekend.

Round 2 will be held in Iloilo from March 2-5.

The event is being organized by the Namissa Camel International Supercross championships in Bacolod this weekend.

## Cuban maestro rejected

### BARE EYE



### Recab Trinidad

ing gold for the country.

A joyful bump, indeed, because, after another debacle in the last Athens Olympics, the same Abap group cried and claimed they did not know how and why they had failed.

Well, if they did not know the reason behind the perennial failure, how in the world would they be able to finally win?

That said, it goes without saying that Abap's newfound formula includes shunning, slapping and disregarding the likes of Señor Honorato Espinosa who, by the way, had also landed a total of 27 gold medals from international tournaments for Cuba.

Now, this is not an effort to bog a dead horse, as the cliché goes.

But we find it our duty to assure that Señor Espinosa, old as he may be, also happens to be a main cog who works as deputy to the great Dr. Alcides Sagara, revered as the architect of Cuba's magnificent national boxing program.

Espinosa, if we are to believe what we saw in Havana last year, was the keeper of the key, one reason he was personally recommended to help in the Philippines by Cuban Ambassador Jorge Rey Jimenez.

Espinosa, we were told, will start moving around the country starting next month to spread the gospel of sound Olympic boxing, under the auspices of the League of Governors.

Now, the best we can do is again wish Manny Lopez and his staff the best of luck in their forthcoming quest for glory.

Of course, we have to take exception to what Lopez had mentioned that "Espinosa had failed to produce, in four years as coach of the Cambodian boxing program, a single gold medal, not even in the SEA Games."

We won't call that basis behind the rejection by the Abap of Espinosa hysterical.

But, hey, Cambodia winning a boxing gold could be equal to having Garcia or anyone in the Comelec hierarchy receive a Papal award for honesty.

At least, it cannot be said that the Cuban maestro did not dare try the impossible.

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# Lebron scores 44 as Cavs rip Spurs

**NEW YORK—LEBRON JAMES** scored 44 points to help the Cleveland Cavaliers end the San Antonio Spurs' nine-game winning streak with a 101-87 win over the defending NBA champions at the Quicken Loans Arena on Monday.

James shot 19-for-33 from the floor and added five assists and four steals for the Cavaliers (30-21), who won for the first time in three games.

Cleveland have struggled against the NBA's better teams this season, but turned in a solid effort against the Spurs, who had also won nine straight road games before this defeat.

As usual, James was the catalyst for the Cavaliers, posting his sixth 40-point game of the season.

"LeBron is one of the best players in this league when he is on his game," Cleveland coach Mike Brown told reporters.

"He willed himself to the rim and he willed this win for us."

James also spent a lot of time covering Tony Parker and as a result, the Spurs star point guard had a tough night, scoring just four points and committing seven turnovers.

"It was a bad combination for LeBron to be great and us giving up all those turnovers and

offensive rebounds," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich added.

The Cavaliers led 45-44 at the half, but took control in the third quarter and eventually built a 17-point lead at one stage in the fourth.

James scored 18 of his points in the third quarter and had 36 points by the time the fourth quarter started.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Cavaliers, while Drew Gooden chipped in with 10 points and 10 rebounds.

San Antonio shot 51 percent from the field to 49 percent for the Cavs, but the Spurs committed 18 turnovers to just five for Cleveland. The Spurs were also just 14-for-24 from the line.

Tim Duncan led San Antonio with 19 points and 10 rebounds, but he scored just three points in the final quarter. Manu Ginobili and Beno Udrih both added 12 points for the Spurs.

The Spurs (40-11) dropped into a first place tie with Dallas in the Southwest Division as the Mavericks routed the New York Knicks 100-72 at home.

Dick Nowitzki scored 21 points and Josh Howard added 14 points for the Mavericks. *Reuters*

COMPLETE RESULTS: Cleveland 101, San Antonio 87; Portland 91 Charlotte 83; Toronto 98, Minnesota 94; N.O./Oklahoma City 97, Washington 96; Dallas 100, NY Knicks 72.

SOLAR Sports will air at 11:30 a.m. today the Houston-LA Clippers tussle. It will be replayed at 5:30 p.m. Sportsplex will feature the New Jersey-Detroit tilt at 7 a.m., followed by the Orlando-Miami encounter at 9:30 p.m.



LAKERS' Shaquille O'Neal hangs on the rim after scoring on a reverse dunk as Jazz's Carlos Boozer (left) and Mehmet Okur look on in their NBA game Feb. 13. Parker was called for a technical foul for hanging on the rim. *AP*

## Russians grab 12th straight pairs gold; US bets prevail

**TURIN, ITALY—WITH GOLD-MEDAL WINNING grace, figure skaters Tatiana Totmianina and Maxim Marinin delivered Russia its 12th straight Olympic pairs title.**

Around them, there were spectacular crashes everywhere Monday at the Turin Winter Games.

Helicopters and ambulances ferried injured skiers, boarders and

luge sliders off the Olympic slopes to local hospitals.

Winning the first figure skating gold of the Turin Games, Russia's "Tot and Max" performed their best programs ever to continue a winning sequence by Russia or the Soviet Union that extends back to the 1964 Olympics.

Earlier, Russia's Svetlana Ishaumouratova nailed 19 of 20 targets on

Gesana San Sicaria's 15-kilometer biathlon course to finish in 49 minutes, 24.1 seconds. Teammate Olga Pyleva took silver.

In sunny Bardonecchia, the day belonged to the American snowboarders. Following the men's example from the day before, Hannah Teter won gold and Gretchen Bleiler won silver in the halfpipe. *AP*

## Jaidee eyes hat trick in KL tourney

**LONDON—THAILAND'S THONGCHAI JAIDEE** will join a select band of players if he wins the Malaysian Open for the third year in a row at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club on Sunday.

Only Ian Woosnam (Monte Carlo Open, 1990-92), Nick Faldo (Irish Open, 1991-93), Colin Montgomerie (PGA Championship, 1998-2000), Tiger Woods (WGC-NEC Invitational, 1999-2001) and Ernie Els (Heineken Classic, 2002-04) have previously achieved a title hat-trick.

The 36-year-old Thongchai, a late beginner in the sport, became the first Asian to retain a European Tour crown when he won at the Saujana Golf and Country Club 12 months ago.

"I have a lot of good friends in the city," he told the European Tour's official website. "I am always looked after very well and it feels like my second home."

"I have enjoyed some success there in the last two years and I will try to win for a third time. It would be very nice."

Thongchai prepared for his treble attempt by visiting the tournament venue at the end of 2005.

"Before the New Year I went to the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club for some practice rounds," he said. "The course was very soft then but the rough was also up so I think it will be a demanding week."

"I generally like the golf courses in Malaysia. The greens are receptive and that makes it easier for us to control our approach shots."

"The greens are tricky in places because of the undulations and the layout is such that you need to think your way round that golf course. It will be a good test."

Padraig Harrington of Ireland and Spain's Miguel Angel Jimenez lead a European bid to deny Thongchai his place in the history books.

Harrington will make his first appearance of the year in Thursday's opening round.

The Dubliner has had a run of near misses in the tournament, having been runner-up twice and in the top 10 on two other occasions.

Harrington was joint eighth last year, fading from contention with a closing 74 that left him 11 shots behind Thongchai.

Among the leading challengers is Lian-Wen Zhang, 40, who has five Asian Tour wins to his credit. In 2004, he became the first Chinese player to compete in the US Masters at Augusta. *Reuters*

## Agassi skips San Jose tilt with strained back

FRENCH skater Yannick Bonheur throws

partner Marylin Pla during their performance in the Pairs Free Skating program. *AP*

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA—ANDRE Agassi withdrew from this week's SAP Open because of a strained lower back, the latest injury setback for the star player.

Agassi, who was seeded second in the ATP event which began on Monday, told tournament director Bill Rapp on Sunday that he couldn't play.

Agassi experienced severe pain in his lower back and down his legs during a

workout on Sunday, tournament officials said in a news release.

Agassi, 35, has played only four matches since reaching the US Open final last September. He sprained his left ankle playing racquetball on Oct. 12.

Agassi aggravated the injury during the season-ending Masters Cup in Shanghai, where he was upset by Nikolay Davydenko in the first round.

He pulled out of last month's Australian Open because of the injury and then lost to Guillermo Garcia-Lopez in the quarterfinals of the Delray Beach Championships this month in his first tournament of the year.

Agassi is currently ranked eighth in the world. His only tournament win last season came in Los Angeles, and he lost to world No. 1 Roger Federer in the US Open final in September. *AP*



AGASSI

The Pairs

World News

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## Filipino-Mexican ring war looms

### IN HUDDLE

HE WANTED ME to call again after his meeting with Ajaxan executives, but I didn't dare take the chance.

I had been trying to touch base with the man for the last 48 hours and I didn't want to wait another 48. Or more, lest he slip away again. Man-of-the-hour Manny Pacquiao hardly answers his cellphone now, and it is probably easier to get through to the President of the Philippines than to the country's "most wanted" person these days.

"Just two questions," I bargained. He obliged.

"How do you feel about doing the blow-by-blow account for television of the Brian Viloria-Jose Antonio Aguirre fight in Las Vegas on Feb. 18 (Feb. 19 in Manila)?"

In a television interview where he was asked the same question, I heard Manny say that he's excited about the prospect because it's the first time he's doing something like this.

But Pacman had a different answer for me. "Pura sa akin, isang malaking karanganan na mapili ako ni Brian," he said, disclosing that he and the Fil-Am boxer had developed a close friendship over the past months.

"Close kami kasi ang trainer namin, tisa—si Freddie Roach. Ang gym na pinagpapakita namin, tisa rin—yung Wild Card Gym sa Los Angeles. Yung mga kaibigan niya, kaibigan ko. Halos araw-araw nagkakasama kami pag nasa Los Angeles ako," Manny said.

Spontaneously, I blurted out a follow-up question: "Do you have any plans of staging a fight here in the Philippines with Brian in the undercard?"

It was not the second question I intended to ask, but I couldn't take it back because Manny was quick to the draw.

"In the works na yan. Hindi lang si Brian ang kasama, marama pang iba like Boom Boom Beurista, Jimrex Jaca. Parang dual meet ang magigayari: Filipino boxers versus Mexican boxers. Para mabigyan naman ng break ang mga boxers natin," Manny said.

Realizing that I had used up my two-query quota, I appealed. "Pwedele bang tumawad, Isa pang question? Sa tingin mo, saan dapat mag-improve si Brian?" I asked.

Manny was quiet for a while.

"Improve, improve, improve...," he was thinking out loud. "More jabs and more hip movement."

I had actually prepared six questions. I thanked Manny who graciously granted the interview, even if he was in the midst of an important meeting, and advised him to go easy on the blow-by-blow.

"Huwang mong masyadong galungan, dahil baka mawalan ng trabaho si Quinto (Henson) at si Chino (Trinidad)," I said.

By way of a post-Valentine treat, the PBA is adding a dash of drama and romance to today's Game 4 of the San Miguel Fiesta Cup best-of-seven title series.

I don't know how ABC-5 intends to do the side feature—whether it will be done on court or right where the lady seats. All I know is that young and dashing Purefoods hero James Yap will do something similar to what Vince Hizon did to then Patricia Bermudez, who is now his wife.

No, James will not ask for Kris Aquino's hand in marriage, like Vince did to Patricia. But he will profess his love for her publicly by presenting her with roses. It could be just a single red rose or dozens, to put the message across loudly.

I was not told if there would be a kissing scene. Kris celebrated her birthday on Valentine's Day yesterday, while James is observing his today.

It's hard to believe that Dave Batista, the WWE wrestling superstar with a humorous physique, is Filipino. But they say he is, although I still have to confirm this.

They say his real surname is Bautista but that his promoters have changed this to "Batista" to make it sound more exotic.

"Will he be here in Manila for the WWE Raw Live? I asked Solar Entertainment COO Peter Chanlong, who, to answer my query, had to give me a short lecture on professional wrestling.

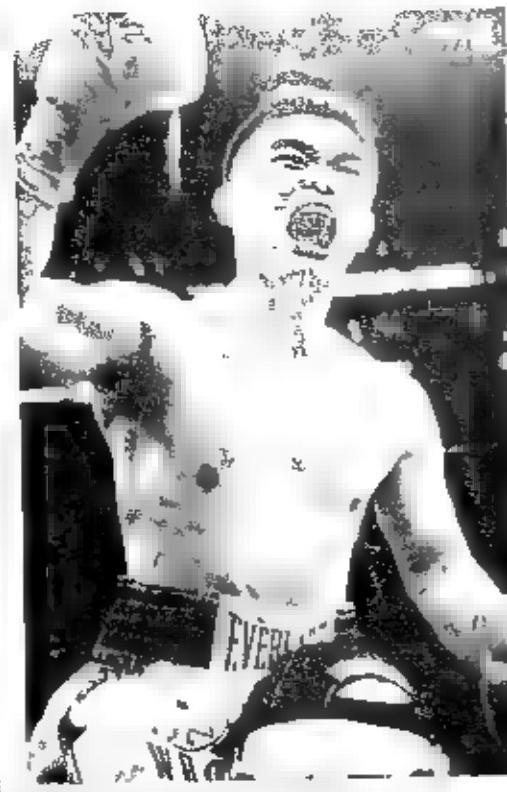
The wrestlers seeing action in Manila this February belong to the Raw group, while Batista is part of Smackdown, Peter said.

Due to the projected success of the Feb. 24-25 event, Peter said there are plans to bring Batista's group here in October.

While still on the topic of wrestling, I got another interesting update on Coke cager Rudy Hatfield from San Miguel exec Robert Non, who said that Rudy may decide to return to the PBA after all.

Confirming that the Fil-Am cager had indeed taken a fireman's course in Detroit to complete his college curriculum, Robert said Rudy had also tried to go into professional wrestling.

I suppose the cager didn't have enough bulk and hulk required in wrestling, because he failed to make the grade.



BRIAN Viloria celebrates his victory over Eric Ortiz of Mexico in Los Angeles last year.

# Pacman sees Viloria winning by stoppage

BRIAN VILORIA HAS THE TOOLS TO stop Mexican Jose Antonio Aguirre in his first defense of the World Boxing Council (WBC) light flyweight crown on Saturday (Sunday in Manila) at the Aladdin Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, according to Manny Pacquiao.

"Brian is stronger and faster," world super featherweight icon Pacquiao said in Filipino. "All he has to do is find the right time and opportunity to land his knockout punch."

Pacquiao has great respect for the speed and punching power of Viloria. He has seen him fight and they train together in trainer Freddie Roach's Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles, California.

"I'm sure Aguirre will be defensive-minded because he is aware of his (Viloria's) power," Pacquiao said.

Viloria, 25, captured the title with a sensational first-round knockout of champion, Eric Ortiz, another Mexican, last Sept. 10 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. That was the same night Pacquiao destroyed Hector Vivasquez in six rounds.

Viloria, son of an Ilocano couple from Navacan, Ilocos Sur, is undefeated in 18 fights, 12 by knockout.

Pacquiao, who will be on deck along with veteran boxing commentator Quinto Henson to annotate Viloria's first title-defense, also gave the 108-lb king some pointers so he

can land his killer punch.

"He (Viloria) should throw more jabs and move his hips more often," Pacquiao said.

The jabs, he said, will build Viloria's rhythm and timing while the hip movement will help him catch his opponent off-guard.

"It's like the crossover in basketball," said Pacquiao, referring to the hip movement. "Your foe will not know where your punch will come."

But he advised Viloria not to lower his guard. Aguirre is a former champion, having ruled the WBC minimumweight division for nearly four years. The fighter called "El Jaguar" totes a 33-4-1 record with 20 KOs.

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BLANCHE Racing's Leo Joel Cordero zooms ahead of teammate Dave Jota in the finals faceoff at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

## Cordero bags nat'l drag racing crown

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—LEO JOEL Cordero of Blanche Racing bagged drag racing's Driver of the Year award following his impressive victory in the final round of the 2005 Red Horse-PCSO National Drag Racing Championship Series recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Cordero turned back teammate Dave Jota in the finals, clocking 13.349 seconds to capture the Pro class plum and finish with 45 points, the same output of Quick 8 champion Walter Pazon of Blanche Racing and Sportsman Class winner Bobby Cunanan of Just Racing.

But BRC drag racing director Fil Gulfin picked Cordero to receive the Drag Racer of the Year for having the most number of wins and a faster time.

"The first basis of the tiebreak was the number of wins, which booted out Pazon from contention," Gulfin explained. "The second was the time, and Cordero had posted the faster time over Cunanan."

Cordero will receive the top purse of P50,000 and the championship trophy during the 2005 Golden Wheel Award set Feb. 28 at

the Casino-Filipino Parañaque.

Pazon and Cunanan ended up with P15,000 each as champions in their respective divisions in the event held in cooperation with the Automobile Association of the Philippines (AAP) and sponsored by Red Horse, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), Petron, Sparco and supported by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Denso Spark Plugs, Casino Filipino, GV 99.9 FM and DaBest98.5 FM.

Pazon ended up as runner-up to teammate Dave Jota who registered a new track time of 11.833 seconds in the final race, but his four-leg total of 45 points earned him the Quick 8 championship.

Cunanan ruled the Sportsman Class over Feix Perez of Alps team with a time of 15.882 seconds.

Raymond Conti emerged the overall champion in the Hotstreet division despite finishing runner-up to Romeo Manue, who ruled the final leg with a time of 16.403.

Bong de la Cruz bagged the Thunder class crown, clocking 14.558 seconds over Nathan Saguil of Just Racing.

## RP muay team spots in world tilt at stake

SPOTS IN THE PHILIPPINE TEAM that will compete in the 3rd World Muay Thai meet late next month will be up for grabs in the 2006 National Championships set March 4 at the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City.

The Quezon City government, led by Mayor Sonny Belmonte and Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista, is hosting the event that would hope to tap only the best for Team Philippines in the world joust in Thailand on March 18-26.

World Muay Thai rules and regulations will be enforced dur-

ing the national championships.

Competitions will be held in 12 categories ranging from 42 to 91-plus kilograms in the men's and women's senior division.

Categories in the 38 and 42 kg divisions in the junior level (10-17 years old) for both men and women have also been added.

Aerobic Muay Thai will also be featured in the tournament for the first time, as are the wai kru and muayboran.

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"IT'S TIME to give back to the industry," says the Mowelfund executive director.

JH GUADUZALAN

By the Inquirer  
Entertainment Staff

**T**HE LEGENDARY actress Rita Gomez once cracked that colleague Boots Anson-Roa's screen image was so pristine, it would be easy to make people believe she had children by immaculate conception.

But as far as husband Pete Roa is concerned, the Mowelfund executive director is "more like Our Lady of Perpetual Help."

Boots explains what she refers to as her coping mechanism: "I have to listen to my husband. He always tells me, 'Don't let your mediatrix complex get the better of you. You can't solve the world's problems on your own.' Me, I tend to drown in the problems at work."

As she admitted during a recent visit to the Inquirer, Mowelfund's concerns can be a tad Herculean as it involves the welfare benefits of the oft-neglected and exploited movie workers.

But Boots, who recently marked her 61st birthday with a big fundraiser at Merk's, is not one to shy away from challenges.

She is in the thick of preparations for the annual "Pelikula at Lipunan" film fest ( spearheaded by Nick Decampo) set at the Gateway Mall from Feb. 24 to March 19 and Mowelfund's 32nd anniversary on March 11.

How was the fundraiser at Merk's?

We were there until 1:30 a.m. Around 20 artists performed for free—Pluto Corrales, Kuh Ledesma, Ramon Jacinto, Ivy Violan, Jenine Desiderio, Jacqui Magno, Tirso Cruz III, Ciara Sotto, Joy Viado—and Richard Merk, of course. Cesar Montano and Ricky Davao did a duet. German Moreno and my daughter Chiqui Roa-Puno hosted the show. We raised around P500,000—donations from Ramon Revilla Sr., Tony Tuviera, Sharon Cuneta, Juan Ponce-Enrique, Jose Man Chan, Precy Tolentino, among others. In the 2005 birthday concert, we raised P300,000.

How helpful were the funds raised last year?

We have lots of projects. But in 2001, a year before I became executive director, Mowelfund had to slash the members' benefits—for example, the death benefit from P35,000 to P25,000 and medicine reimbursement from P5,000 to P3,000. That was because our subsidy from the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF) had gone down by 50 percent. We used to receive 60 percent of the amusement taxes, but now it's down to 30 percent. After the 2005 fundraiser, however, we restored the benefits to the original figures.

You have mentioned Mowelfund's

graying membership as another challenge.

We have more honorary members, those who have been members in good standing for 10 consecutive years and have reached age 60. When a member acquires honorary status, he no longer needs to pay the annual fee of P300. Out of 4,500 members, 2,700 are active. Among the active members, 700 have reached honorary status.

Is it true that you have to resort to "creative" ways to solve Mowelfund's financial problems?

We had an ukay-ukay [garage sale] once. I also joined [the TV show] "Game KNB," along with other Mowelfund members Eddie Romero, Joel Torre, Rez Cortez and Caridad Sanchez. I told Direk Eddie, a National Artist for Film: "Let's eat humble pie for Mowelfund." It was so funny; I was eliminated in the first round. The question was: Are the characters in the cartoon "Bug Rats" mice? I said, "Yes!" Joel won P300,000 for us. He also won a computer showcase which I turned over to our graphics department.

As she admitted during a recent visit to the Inquirer, Mowelfund's concerns can be a tad Herculean as it involves the welfare benefits of the oft-neglected and exploited movie workers.

Is it true that Mowelfund is the only one of its kind in the world?

That we know of. We feel heartened because other local groups are planning similar welfare systems.

Jun Nicdao of the Kapangan ng mga Broadcaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) and Raul Alvarez of the Advertising Board of the Philippines have approached us. We'll lend them our charter and by-laws.

Why did you agree to head Mowelfund?

In the words of our staff, "I was set up!" Hahahah! I became a board member in 1994. I was aware of what was happening. Still, I accepted because the movie industry has been very generous to my family. My father [Oscar Moreno] raised us with his earnings as an actor. Now, I am also making a good living in show biz. I felt it was time to give back.

Do you still have time for acting?

I have to make time. This is my bread and butter. I did the [MMFF entry] "Blue Moon" and [GMA 7 show] "Sugo." Now, I am in the film "Sukob," under Star Cinema. I was also offered to play Donita Rose's mother in an international movie.

You also did the digital film "Ilusyon"?

It was just a one-day shoot. I was also in Peque Gallaga's "Pinoy Blonde."

I said yes to "Ilusyon" because its directors, Paolo Villaluna and Elen Ramos, were former staffers and graduates of Mowelfund. We have a film education component that has produced an impressive list of graduates—Lay Diaz, Mark Meily, Yam Laranas, Neil Daza...

What's your take on the MMFF controversies?

As [Metro Manila Develop-

MOWELFUND/A2-2

# Mowelfund mediatrix

... a.k.a. Boots Anson-Roa, who says she will move heaven and earth—and eat humble pie—for the welfare of movie workers

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## ENTERTAINMENT

## Mowelfund mediatrix

From page A2-1

ment Authority Chair Bayani Fernando would say, intrigue is the MMFF's twin.

As head of Mowelfund, I'm a member of the MMFF executive committee. But to avoid [conflict of interests], I begged off from meetings in which "Blue Moon" was in the agenda.

There's a call to abolish the MMFF.

Of course, I don't agree. This is self-serving and selfish, I admit, because Mowelfund is a beneficiary of the

MMFF has really helped the industry. Let us not lose sight of that fact.

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2pm	AEON FLUX	2pm	FUN W/ DICK & JANE	2pm	PINK PANTHER
3pm	EIGA SAI 2006	3pm	FIREWALL	3pm	AEON FLUX
4pm	BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN	4pm	PINK PANTHER	4pm	GOAL
<b>PREMIERE</b>		7pm	<b>CINEMA 2000</b>		
10pm	GOLD	8pm	CLOSE TO YOU		
		9pm	CLOSE TO YOU		
		10pm	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU		
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2	AEON FLUX	2	SAVANNAH	2	Waltermart
3	WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	3	SAVANNAH	3	Cinema 2000
4	CLOSE TO YOU	4	RESERVED	4	Pavilion Mall
5	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU				
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Island Cinema Complex Recto					
1pm	GOAL	1pm	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1pm	CLOSE TO YOU
2pm	NEON FLUX	2pm	CLOSE TO YOU	2pm	UNDERWORLD-2
3pm	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	3pm	RESERVED	3pm	PINK PANTHER
4pm	CLOSE TO YOU	4pm		4pm	
5pm	BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN				
1	PINK PANTHER	1	1pm	1pm	
2	AEON FLUX	2	2pm	2pm	
3	WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	3	3pm	3pm	
4	CLOSE TO YOU	4	4pm	4pm	
5	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU				
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1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1	1pm
2	BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN	2	CLOSE TO YOU	2	2pm
3	CLOSE TO YOU	3	UNDERWORLD	3	3pm
4	THE NEW WORLD	4	PINK PANTHER	4	4pm
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1	CLOSE TO YOU	1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1	1pm
2	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	2	CLOSE TO YOU	2	2pm
3	RESERVED	3	UNDERWORLD	3	3pm
4	RESERVED	4	PINK PANTHER	4	4pm
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1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1	1pm
2	RESERVED	2	CLOSE TO YOU	2	2pm
3	RESERVED	3	DERALEO	3	3pm
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1 MUNICH - THX	5 AEON FLUX
2 CLOSE TO YOU	7 FIREWALL
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
4 GOAL	9 NEW WORLD
5 PINK PANTHER	10 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE

### HERMITA

1 CLOSE TO YOU	5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
2 FUN with DICK and JANE FIREWALL	
3 NEW WORLD I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	6 PINK PANTHER
4 AEON FLUX	7 GOAL

### METRO

1 NEW WORLD	5 FUN with DICK and JANE
2 PINK PANTHER	6 FIREWALL
3 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	7 CLOSE TO YOU
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	8 WALK THE LINE

### NOVALIGEST

1 PINK PANTHER	4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2 FUN with DICK and JANE	5 GOAL
3 FIREWALL	6 CLOSE TO YOU

### GTSQUARE MALABON

1 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	1 PINK PANTHER
2 CLOSE TO YOU	2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
3 RESERVE	3 AEON FLUX
4 RESERVE	4 CLOSE TO YOU

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### STA. ROSA

1 PINK PANTHER	1 PINK PANTHER
2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	2 WALK THE LINE
3 SAW 2	3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 CLOSE TO YOU	4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5 UNDERWORLD 2	5 SAW 2

### DASMARINAS

1 PINK PANTHER	1 CLOSE TO YOU
2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	2 FUN with DICK and JANE
3 WALK THE LINE	3 PINK PANTHER
4 CLOSE TO YOU	4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5 UNDERWORLD 2	5 PINK PANTHER

### ANGELES

1 PINK PANTHER	1 CLOSE TO YOU
2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	2 FUN with DICK and JANE
3 WALK THE LINE	3 PINK PANTHER
4 CLOSE TO YOU	4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5 UNDERWORLD 2	5 PINK PANTHER

### STARMILLS

1 PINK PANTHER	1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 UNDERWORLD 2	2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	3 FUN with DICK and JANE
4 MUNICH	4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5 FIREWALL	5 PINK PANTHER
6 CLOSE TO YOU	6 FIREWALL

### ILOILO

1 PINK PANTHER	1 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
2 CLOSE TO YOU	2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
3 SAW 2	3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 FUN with DICK and JANE	4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	5 PINK PANTHER
6 BLOODRAYNE	6 SAW 2

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## ENTERTAINMENT

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SOME of the pieces worn by Juris of MYMP at the pop group's recently concluded concert ("MYMP's Best—The Repeat") at the Araneta Concert were gifts from TV host and MYMP fan Kris Aquino.

## SHANG CINEPLEX

1 PINK PANTHER MTRCB: GP 2 EIGA SAI 2006 2:00, 5:00, 8:00

2 AEON FLUX MTRCB: R-13

3 BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN MTRCB: R-18

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MTRCB: GP

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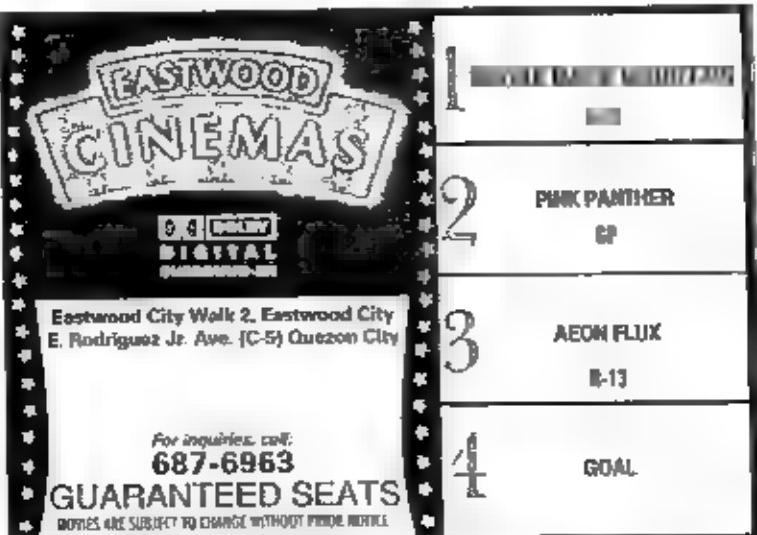
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## Undeputed champion and other boob-tube boobooos

HOST: WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST WISH FOR yourself this year?

Guest: That I can find time despite my busy schedule to take a week off and go to the province, so I can visit my town home! (Ay, balikad yata!) \*\*\*

Host: Were you outstanding in academics even as a young student?

Guest: You might say that. For example, in our school's weekly spelling contest, I became undeputed champion for weeks! (What in the world is an "undeputed" champion?) \*\*\*

Host: What is a special attraction of your city?

Guest: Proudly, we have one of the longest doll factories in the country! (That long, huh?) \*\*\*

Host: Do you want to have many children?

Guest: I do. I had a happy childhood, so hindi ako takot magkaroon ng malaking anak! (Marating anak? Malaking anak? Make up your mind!) \*\*\*

Host: What do you have to say to your predecessor?

Guest: He should leave our office with his hands clean. He should account for all of the costs that his controversial projects have occurred! (Occurred? Accrued? Incurred? Ano ba talaga, kayo?) \*\*\*

Host: What do you want to say to your best friend on her birthday?

Guest: I want to say: Sana hindi lahat ng tao, goyo mo! (So much for best friends!) \*\*\*

Host: Tell us more about yourself.

Guest: For example, what were your parents? (Humans, we hope!) \*\*\*

Host: How successful was your group's exhibit?

Guest: Well, I notice that they like the pictures! (Well, duuh...) \*\*\*

Host: Where did you study abroad?

Guest: In Beijing, Germany! (As opposed to Berlin, China?) \*\*\*

Host: What do you think of your costar?

Guest: He's so good—when it comes to acting experience, I take my hat to him! (And, what does he do with it?) \*\*\*

Host: Why did you decide to play a villain in your latest role on TV?

Guest: Frankly, playing leading men too long can be boring. I'm out to prove that I'm not just more than a pretty face! (Ah, please repeat?) \*\*\*

Host: How did you feel during your first sexy pictorial?

Guest: Ok lang, trabaho lang.

Host: But wasn't it nerve-wracking wearing only briefs?

(Don't answer that, please?) \*\*\*

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THE NEW WORLD	GOAL	AEON FLUX	BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2006

## OPENING TODAY

## Close to You

Stars John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo, Sam Milby  
Directed by Cathy Garcia Molina

In Star Cinema's second film for this year, Cruz and Alonzo play best friends. Unknown to the girl, her besom buddy is in love with her. He feels threatened when another childhood friend enters the picture—a Fil-Am band vocalist (Milby). Drumbeaters call this "an irresistible romantic triangle" and claim that the Cruz-Alonzo love team is revitalized by the fact that the pair is put in "amusing situations" in this new film supported by a leading toothpaste company. As a bonus, Milby is making his big-screen debut in this Valentine presentation. To those who've just emerged from a cave, he was a product of "Pinoy Big Brother's" first season.



## Brokeback Mountain

Stars Heath Ledger, Jake Gyllenhaal, Michelle Williams, Anne Hathaway  
Directed by Ang Lee

An award winner in Venice and the Golden Globes and, now, a front runner in the Oscars derby, this "sweeping romance" has been hailed by critics as "groundbreaking" because it dares to chronicle a 20 year affair between two men, and married cowboys (Ledger and Gyllenhaal) at that. It is based on a short story written by Annie Proulx (Pulitzer winner for "The Shipping News") and included in the prestigious O. Henry anthology in 1997. The titanic mountain serves as the pair's "love nest, a reckoning place... an island of denial." Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times raves: "Lee is a director whose films are set in many nations and many times. What they have in common is an instinctive sympathy for the characters... [He] respects the entire arc of the story, right down to the lonely conclusion. [The] closing scene... is heartbreaking in what is said, and not said, about their world." It's a love, according to Stephen Holden of the New York Times, that is "stumbled into, thwarted and held sorrowfully in the heart."



## The Pink Panther

Stars Steve Martin, Kevin Kline, Beyoncé Knowles  
Directed by Shawn Levy

Martin takes over the Inspector Jacques Clouseau role made immortal by Peter Sellers. The bumbling French cop is assigned to investigate the murder of a world-famous soccer coach and recover a stunning diamond ring called the "Pink Panther." Hilarity ensues as Clouseau closes in on the criminal. Brian Lowry of Variety says, "It's neither [a] disaster nor a fully realized madcap farce... a feature-length 'Saturday Night Live' sketch." Michael Rechtshaffen of the Hollywood Reporter thinks "there's a stale, warmed-over feel to the entire production... [it] fails to generate the necessary comic sparks. Too many gags fall flat on their face long before the inspector does and the entire pace feels like it's on some sort of three-second delay."

## Aeon Flux

Stars Charlize Theron, Frances McDormand, Pete Postlethwaite  
Directed by Karyn Kusama

Based on a trippy MTV animated series, this girl-power flick is set in the year 2415, four years after a deadly virus wiped out 99 percent of humanity. The surviving one percent relocates to the "pristine walled-in city of Bregna—a dubious paradise." Heroine Aeon (Theron) is a spandex-clad assassin who sides with rebels and attempts to murder Bregna's leader, to avenge her sister's death. Bob Longino of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution complains: "Aeon Flux" is as enjoyable as acid reflux." Mark Collette of the Tyler Morning Telegraph finds it "entertaining in its own right... more stylish than 'The Island.'"

## Goal!

Stars Kuno Becker, Stephen Dillane, Anna Friel  
Directed by Danny Cannon

Envisioned as the first part of a trilogy (and, OPENING/A-5

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# Gov't raises Customs' revenue collection target for this year

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS INCREASED the Bureau of Customs' revenue target for this year to P196 billion from the original P191.5 billion.

The move was a consequence

of a recent decision that allowed collecting agencies to include non-cash payments in the computation of their revenue collections.

A source from the Department of Finance, head agency of the BOC, said the original target did

not take into account non-cash duty payments that the BOC might collect.

DOF and the Department of Budget and Management officials earlier said that effective this year, the government would already include non-cash duty and tax collections of the BOC and the

Bureau of Internal Revenue in the computation of their revenue collections.

The move is intended to make the Philippines' fiscal reporting system consistent with international standards. Finance and budget officials said the accrual system of accounting, which re-

quired the inclusion of non-cash collections in the computation of revenues, was recommended by the International Monetary Fund and is practiced by neighboring countries.

The BOC last year collected P154.4 billion, surpassing its P151.2-billion target. Of the

amount, P12.746 billion was in the form of non-cash.

The source said the DOF was still studying whether the BIR's target of P675.4 billion for this year should also be increased. The BIR is lobbying for its target to be maintained, saying it was already high.

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By Doris C. Dumlaon

**STATE-OWNED DEVELOPMENT** Bank of the Philippines will expand both the scope and scale of its lending operations this year to be able to realize P3.4 billion to P3.5 billion in profit.

The bank last year posted a net income of P3.2 billion.

"Priority in the years ahead is to generate scale in all our activities—it's the ability to grow the book. We have to make sure we have adequate scale to remain strategic, relevant and true to our charter. Our developmental side should shift to higher gear this year," DBP president Reynaldo David said in a briefing yesterday.

Lending to local government units, for instance, will remain a key focus with greater emphasis on housing projects, public hospitals, public markets, public schools, bus terminals and LGU computerization programs, he said.

Widening its business scope



DAVID

means making inroads into new areas such as microfinance and small and medium enterprise lending.

In the meantime, DBP got the regulators go-ahead for its plan to raise as much as P10 billion in tier 2 capital.

It recently raised P2.35 billion in

fresh funds from the first tranche of a P2.2 billion capital notes offering.

DBP's profit last year was 41.41 percent better than the year-ago level.

David noted a 15.25-percent rise in gross income at P16.7 billion from P14 billion a year earlier. Gross loan portfolio registered a 31.26 percent rise to reach P111.53 billion, from P84.97 billion in the previous year.

The bank's past due ratio was recorded at 7.43 percent versus the industry's average of 10.25 percent.

Total assets stood at P210.5 billion or 33.98 percent better than a year ago, while net worth also expanded by 15.11 percent to P22.85 billion.

With P54.22 billion in total funds from official development assistance sources, David said the DBP was in position to sustain relevant lending programs that would benefit the domestic economy.

## State bank expects '06 profit to hit P3.4-3.5B

### Expanding scope, scale of operations

## PPA to float P2B worth of 7-yr notes

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY yesterday said it would sell P2 billion worth of seven-year bonds in the second quarter to raise funds for the upgrading of major ports in key provinces.

PPA assistant general manager Aida Diaz said the bond sale was approved by the port regulator's board last week. The borrowing will be handled by Development Bank of the Philippines.

"We still have to sit down with the DPB and the Bureau of Treasury to finalize the terms and the documentation of the fund-raising activity," said Diaz, who also heads the PPA's finance group.

The PPA official said the borrowing would incur an interest charge of 1 to 1.5 percentage points above the benchmark treasury bill rate.

The maritime authority said proceeds of the bond sale will finance the upgrade of ports in Cagayan de Oro, Davao, General Santos, Iloilo, Osmeña and Zamboanga.

## Debate on cheaper drugs rages amid high cost of healthcare

From page B1

versus the interests of the broader public, which is clamoring for more affordable healthcare.

At stake is the future of the country's P65-billion pharmaceutical industry, and more importantly, the health of millions of impoverished Filipinos, many of whom can barely afford to make ends meet, much less spend for medication when they get sick.

So far, however, the battle has been one-sided, with local drug prices still among the most expensive in the region, and some claim, in the world—mainly because the local system continues to prioritize the protection of foreign firm's intellectual property rights over making drugs more affordable.

For example, a 500 mg capsule of Ponstan (generic name: mefenamic acid) costs as much as P20.98 in local drugstores. In India and Pakistan, however, where state policies are more egalitarian, the same medication would cost only the equivalent of P2.80 and PL.48 a capsule, respectively.

### Government intervention

With this in mind, some lawmakers, regulators, and industry players are now pushing to amend local laws to help bring down the prices of medicine.

Recently, Senate trade and commerce committee chair Manuel A. Roxas II filed Senate Bill No. 2139, which aims to lower drug or medicine prices by amending provisions of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines.

Supported by Sen. Juan M. Flavio, the bill has gathered a significant amount of support from local regulators and industry groups, but is being opposed by the influential Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP), an umbrella organization dominated by multinational drug makers.

The salient features of the bill include institutionalizing the following:

- Parallel importation—The importation of patented medicines from another country where they are cheaper into the Philippines. At present, the state-owned Philippine International Trading Corp (PITC) can only import "off patent" medicines from abroad. Even if these are off patent, PITC is still being sued for infringement by foreign pharmaceutical companies.

White the Pfizer chief justified the pharmaceutical industry's policies, he himself shot holes in the argument most commonly used by drug firms in defending their high prices, even as he stressed that prices need to come down to make health care more affordable.

Proponents of SB 2139—and millions of Filipino consumers—couldn't agree more. (To be continued)

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Day before publication

# OBITUARIES

*In Loving Memory of*  
**ATTY. MAURINO "URING" R. SOBREPEÑA**  
of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija  
June 10, 1923 – February 15, 1996

His loving wife, ONOR, children, JOE and MERLY FAIGIANT, FRANK and ALICE FERINA, GUY and MARY SOBREPEÑA, CHITO and ANNA SOBREPEÑA, RINO SOBREPEÑA and DAN and LEAH JOSLIN, gandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for his soul.

Masses will be celebrated today at the:  
St. Joseph Cathedral, San Jose City ..... 6:00 A.M.  
Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows ..... 7:00 A.M.  
Shrine of the Two Hearts, San Jose City ..... 6:00 A.M.  
Mary Help of Christian Church, San Jose City ..... 6:00 P.M.  
St. Edward the Confessor Church ..... Feb. 19, 2006  
New Fairfield, Connecticut, U.S.A. ..... 7:30 A.M.

**Orlando "Orling" Quinto Mendoza**  
of San Agustin, Lubao, Pampanga  
Peacefully joined his Creator on February 12, 2006 at 5:30 a.m.

He will be missed by his brothers and sisters  
Mr. & Mrs. Telesforo Q. Mendoza, Dr. Romeo Q. Mendoza,  
Ms. Tessie Q. Mendoza, Mr. & Mrs. Loreto Q. Mendoza,  
Mr. & Mrs. Dominador M. de Leon, Mr. & Mrs. Carmelino Q.  
Mendoza, Mr. & Mrs. Honorio Q. Mendoza.  
Ms. Babes M. Tolosa, Mr. & Mrs. Ricardo L. Crescini Jr. (Australia),  
nephews, nieces, relatives & friends. We request the pious reader  
to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at his residence San Agustin, Lubao, Pampanga.  
Interment will be tomorrow, February 16, 2006  
at the Lubao Memorial Park after the 2:00 o'clock p.m. Mass.

## Dr. BENEDICTO P. RIVERA, MD

Professor III, University of Sto. Tomas College of Medicine & Surgery  
Fellow, International College of Surgeon  
Fellow, Philippine College of Surgeon

Peacefully joined his Creator  
on February 12, 2006 at the age of 78.

His loving wife Telly; children Leah, Bing and Sonny, Christine, Junie, Robert, S.J., Noel and Bechie, Josephine (†), Christian and grandchildren, Rhia, Dindin, Beatrice and Harley request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, February 17, 2006  
at the Loyola Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass  
which will be held at the UST Chapel.

## LIM SAY

AKA CHUA PUG of Atimonan, Quezon  
Peacefully joined his Creator on February 11, 2006  
at the age of 96.

His bereaved wife Charing Tan; children, grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Rizal Funeral Homes, Inc., Libertad, Pasay City, where mass will be held at 7:00 p.m. every night. Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City tomorrow, February 16, 2006 at 8:00 a.m.

Our Dearly Beloved

## RODOLFO CAMAQUIN VIDAD

Peacefully joined our Lord  
on February 13, 2006  
at the age of 78

His loving sisters Julia V. Nagtalon and Editha C. Vidad, his nephews and nieces, Melvyn & Angie, Karina & Ed Sanchez, Eric & Susan, Ruby & Eloy Foronda, Raul & Gina, and Rene, his grandchildren and great grandchildren; and all his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Chapel A, La Funeraria Paz, Inc., located at G Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on February 16, 2006, 3:00 p.m., at Himalayang Pilipino, Quezon City, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass

## RUBY KELLEY MANGAHAS

May 27, 1916 - February 3, 2006

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord  
in Stockton, California at the age of 89.

Her sons, Mahar, Rabel, Fred Bonny and their families; nieces and nephews, other relatives and friends request your prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

She will lie in state at the Church of the Risen Lord in the University of the Philippines campus, Diliman, Quezon City. A musical tribute in her honor will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, February 17, 2006 at the Nicanor Abelardo Hall of the U.P. College of Music.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Saturday, February 18, 2006 after the 8:00 a.m. Christian services at the Church of the Risen Lord.

## ENGINEER/ARCHITECT RODOLFO CAMAQUIN VIDAD

Vice-President & Treasurer

Died in the Grace of our Lord on February 13, 2006 at the age of 78.

With a deep sense of loss,

The Board of Directors, Stockholders and Employees of

## AGVID CONSTRUCTION CO., INC.

condole with his entire family and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, G Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on February 16, 2006, 3:00 p.m., at Himalayang Pilipino, Quezon City, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

"...absent  
from the  
body  
to be  
present  
with the  
Lord."  
2 Corinthians 5:8

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you who are weary  
and burdened, and  
I will give you  
rest."

Matthew 11:28

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Manolo S. Camera	Chapel B-5, Q.C.	Feb. 18, 2006 9:00 AM	North Cemetery
CMB Brian Constantino	Chapel C-12, Q.C.	Feb. 18, 2006 9:00 AM	Chloro Cemetery

## CLASSIFIEDS

### ANOTHER YEAR FOR PMAP & CHINATRUST PARTNERSHIP

Chinatrust (Philippines) Commercial Bank Corp recently signed Memo of Agreement with PMAP as 2006 PMAP Partner led by its leaders (center) Chinatrust's president Mr. Joey Bermudez and PMAP's president, Atty. Rico De Guzman. Witnessing the signing are Ms. Jo Natividad, Chinatrust senior VP for Marketing, Ms. Debbie Cantano, PMAP treasurer, Mr. Tony Robles, Chinatrust EVP for Retail Banking and Ms. Imee Centeno, PMAP vice president.



The Beta Epsilon Fraternity  
of the U.P. College of  
Engineering joins the  
bereaved family of

Prof. Dominador Ibarra Ilio, BE 1937  
BSCE 1939, BSGE 1939, MSCE

in mourning the loss of a brother, teacher, engineer, poet, writer, painter, WWII guerilla, and friend.

"Prof" passed away peacefully at the age of 92, last February 7, 2006, in his hometown Malinao, Aklan.

Interment will be on February 18, 2006 after the 8:00 A.M. mass in Malinao.

A Memorial Mass and Necrological Service will be held on February 21, 6:00 p.m. at the College of Engineering Theater, Melchor Hall, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." John 11:25-26

# MOTORING

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## New Galant to face off vs Camry, Accord

By Tessa R. Salazar

**T**HE THREE-DIAMOND LOGO car company, which is determined to leave its woes behind as the maker of Eclipse (an enthusiast's favorite, particularly in the United States) and the iconic "Evo" (cult status achiever in the high-performance sedan category), launches the all new Galant 240M.

The Galant, Mitsubishi's European-inspired sedan, is an exclusive design by Mercedes-Benz's former chief designer Oliver Boulay. It is one of Boulay's last projects with Mitsubishi.

### Aggressive product offensive

It has been seen that the Galant 240M signals the start of an aggressive product offensive for Mitsubishi in 2006. The Galant 240M (with the same engine as the Mitsubishi Grandis' 2.4-liter Mivec engine) will compete with the two most

popular full-sized sedans in the market: the 2.4-liter Toyota Camry (which has two variants in the 2.4-liter, and one 3-liter variant) and Honda Accord (which has a 2.4 and 3-liter variants).

In the United States, the Galant offers a 3.8-liter V6 aside from its 2.4-liter engine. Asked why Mitsubishi did not offer the V6 variant in the Philippines, Froilan Dytianquin, assistant vice president for marketing, said the V6 market did not offer sustained demands in the long run.

### Introductory sales strong

He observed that the introductory sales of 3-liter sedans were initially strong but the sustaining sales turned out small. "There's still more sales volume in the 2.4 category," he said. Dytianquin stressed that the small sustaining volume in the three-liter category is due to the rising fuel cost.

Wider and longer than the Camry and

the Accord (but lower than the Camry, with its aerodynamic considerations), the Galant is bigger in every aspect than its predecessor, measuring 4885mm long (Accord at 4831mm; Camry at 4815mm), 1840mm wide (Accord at 1821mm, Camry at 1795mm) and 1,480mm high (Accord at 1455mm; Camry at 1515mm). Its cabin room length of 1997mm boasts of being the most spacious in its class with more leg room for its passengers.

The wheelbase in mm are 2738 (Galant) 2720 (Accord) 2720 (Camry)

### From China Motors

Known as the Mitsubishi Grunder in Taiwan, the Galant 240M came from China Motors Corp. assembled exclusively in Taiwan for left-hand-drive countries in Southeast Asia. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Inc. has initially imported 50 units.

The 2.4-liter engine is a 4G69 Mit-



GALANT 240M

subishi Valve timing and lift Electronic Control System (Mivec) engine. Mivec engines are known for maximizing fuel efficiency, torque and low-end pickup while minimizing exhaust emissions.

The engine is mated to a 4-speed Invecs II automatic transmission with Sportronic. Invecs II intelligent and innovative vehicle electronic control system with two control programs.

It has an all-wheel independent suspension system with MacPherson struts with stabilizer bars up front and multi-link with stabilizer bars at the rear to help reduce understeer and improve cornering stability.

It has four-wheel disc brakes, tandem brake boosters, monitored by the four-sensor, 3-channel ABS with electronic brakeforce distribution that prevents locking (to remain steerable during emergency braking). It also has reinforced impact safety evolution.

With a three-year or 100,000 km warranty, the Galant has an introductory price of P1,548,000. Camry is priced at P1,558 million (2.4V), P1,57 million (2.4E) and P1,762 million (3.0E) while Accord's new SRP with 12 percent VAT is P1,428 million for the 2.4 liter and P1,663 million for the 3 liter.

## FIA official arriving for AAP celebration

MAX MOSELEY, PRESIDENT OF THE Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the Paris-based governing body for motor sports worldwide, has designated FIA Secretary General Peter Doggweiler to attend the grand 75th anniversary celebration of Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) this May.

AAP is the country's first auto club and, being the only motoring organization in the

Philippines accredited by the FIA, officiates all motor sport activities in the country and issues competition licenses to race drivers aside from organizing permits.

Corollary to this, one of the AAP Diamond Anniversary events that Doggweiler will attend is the launch of Fast Lane, a coffee table book on Philippine motor sports history and personalities replete with pictures. Fast Lane is one of the anniversary projects of AAP's motor sports committee which is chaired by Mandy Edique, one of several AAP directors (the others are AAP president Gus Lagman and VP Johnny Angeles) who were race drivers in their youth.

### Motor sports

The other AAP anniversary activities that Doggweiler will surely enjoy attending are the motor sport events. Aside from the annual Sampaguita Rally, which is slated for April 22 as a precursor to anniversary week, a karting competition will be held on Sunday, May 14, at the Kart Trak, Boom Grounds on Roxas Boulevard. A rally cross, slalom or 4x4 event is also planned. Appropriately enough, the Diamond Anniversary Week will be capped by the Philippine Motor Sport Awards Dinner hosted annually by AAP.

AAP joined the FIA in 1951 when it was still known as the Philippine Motor Association. AAP has also been affiliated for over 50 years with the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme

(AIT), which is based in Geneva and was recently merged with the FIA.

Touring, in fact, is one of the Seven Mandates of AAP aside from motor sports. The national auto club strives to provide its members (currently 60,000 in number) and the motoring public with information on road conditions, travel accommodations and tourist attractions, thereby promoting domestic tourism.

### Tourism support

Small wonder that the Department of Tourism is supporting AAP's Diamond Anniversary by including its activities in the DoT website and extending VIP airport reception and assistance to the FIA secretary general and members from other FIA-affiliated Asian auto clubs traveling to Manila for AAP's 75th anniversary golf tournament.

Apart from tracing the development of motor sports in the Philippines via a coffee table book, AAP will also highlight the development of the automotive industry via a Vintage Car Parade and an Auto Show from May 12, Friday, until May 14, Sunday, at The Forum, PICC displaying the oldest and latest models of major car manufacturers. AAP after all, is the national auto club and you cannot be a member unless you are a motocross, if not a car lover.

It is the Club's good luck that AAP director Ronald Reidenbach, chair of the AAP Diamond

Anniversary committee, is also president emeritus of the Vintage Car Club. The anniversary week kicks off with a Vintage Car Parade along Roxas Boulevard on Sunday morning, May 7, that should attract car collectors and car enthusiasts.

### Road safety

Prior to all these, AAP's mission to promote road safety takes center stage with the fourth of a series of six conferences on road safety organized by AAP and the University of the Philippines National Center for Transportation Studies with Toyota Motor Corp. Philippines as sponsor. AAP plans to launch a pilot Road Safety Zone at the UP Diliman campus during the Diamond Anniversary week. A conference on alternative fuels is also being planned.

AAP members, naturally, stand to enjoy most the 75th anniversary observance of the Club. The annual AAP general membership meeting on May 11 will be an extra special one with all the friols and hoopla befitting a Diamond Anniversary celebration, including a greater number of raffle prizes.

**TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER:** I don't approve of political jokes—I've seen too many of them get elected.

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph

## A history, a worship of heat

IT IS VERY DIFFICULT NOT TO TALK ABOUT the topic of love these days; the cogs of business and advertising have begun to spin in preparation for another billion dollar payday on the 14th. Who can blame them? The human emotions associated with attraction are quite irrepressible and rather decisive in nature—hence the undivided attention of the greeting card companies, florists and motels.

While I'm certain my colleagues in the print media are going to fill their allotted spaces with "woohoo and winning" stories, the confines of this column will focus on a love that is distant, unrequited, insanely passionate and very, very personal. While I am attracted to cars in general like any normal octane-blooded petrol head, my heart belongs, wholly and irrevocably, to the unassuming hatchback. Worse still is my long standing devotion to those hatches that display enough dynamic heat to be labeled as truly blistering.

### History of the genre

What makes a hot hatch ever so desirable? Is this something that can be attributed to a single factor, like power or handling? We must look at the rather extensive history of the genre, a veritable who's who of the best money for speed in the last 30 years or so.

We have to look back to June 1976 for the recognized pioneer and spiritual forebear of this entertaining segment. There cannot be a better start to this narrative than the Mk1 Volkswagen Golf GTI. Take a sweet handling, lightweight chassis and power with an ample amount of engine; this Golf came with a factory 1.6-liter with a then whopping 108 bhp. Success of this experiment in "blue collar speed" (a term used to describe the value for money drive quality of these cheap pocket rockets), then spread like wildfire.

Included in the first batch of hot hatch manufacturers are the marques of Renault, Vauxhall/Opel and Ford. Cars like the Peugeot 205 GTI, the Renault 5 GT Turbo as well as the Ford Escort XR3i are excellent specimens born of this "power to the masses" movement. Ten years into the phenomenon and another icon is born of the manufacturing race for more heat; Ford's 1986 Escort RS Turbo now comes stock with 130 bhp with tuners often extracting well over 200 bhp from these cars.

### More familiar image

A vehicle that is a more familiar image in the Filipino hot hatch consciousness is the 1997 Honda Civic Type R. Though initially unavailable in the local market, the images of these real world speedsters came over the In-

### MY DRIFT



Andre Palma

ternet and foreign publications. Factory supplied with a 185-bhp 1.6-liter, in the form of the B16B screamer, the tweaked suspension along with the boy racer good looks more than helped ensure the classic status of these Championship White colored bolts of lightning.

The definitive expressions of these types of vehicles have obviously come from the realm of motorsport, especially from the lethal Group B formula of the World Rally Championships. We cannot talk of these fire-breathing widow makers without talking of the cars from Lancia. They took a then tame 185-bhp Delta HF Turbo 4x4 and went properly wild with their imaginations, engineering abilities and marketing budgets. The first in the developmental history of this mental vehicle was the Evoluzione specification, now 215-bhp from a two-liter block.

Then in a moment that is debatably borne of either genius or sheer madness, the monolithic Group B Integrale was conceived. The sheer numbers involved are insane, 450-bhp from a two-liter, four-pot unimaginably blown by both a supercharger and a turbocharger. With foot-long flames sprouting from this rally car during every downshift. It can be said that this is a car that literally burned and branded itself into the imagination of many a car enthused youth of the '80s.

### New wave

Thirty years on and the world market is once again inundated with a new wave of these cars. More than a dozen manufacturers produce a hot hatch in some form or the other, ranging from the original pioneers in Europe to even brands like Kia (with their 280-bhp, AWD Sport).

Though what critically defines the segment is clear, that of economical power with confident handling, certain X factors also must be present. It would not be out of place to say that styling and a motorsport background are great plus factors for these types of vehicles. All I know is that I'm thankful for the near permanence of the hot hatch segment, partially for the wonderful play on the themes of power and practicality. For the most part though, the gratification is personal.

**BOSCH**  
Invented for life.



## MOTORING



## X5 Security: discreet yet potent vehicle

By Charles E. Buban

**T**HE PURPOSE OF RIDING in an armored vehicle is to be able to thwart an initial armed attack—should such a situation occur—and get out of the place as quickly as possible.

To do this, the vehicle must not only possess a high level of armor protection but also handling performance as well as driving character that is the same if not better than its unarmored counterpart.

"The first line of defense for anyone at

risk is discretion," BMW Group Asia Douglas Hornell Scott said. "So we've developed this product with the right blend of luxury, security and discretion."

Scott recently planed to the country to formally unveil the armored version of the German automaker's best selling sports activity vehicle, the X5 Security.

## Increase in threat

"Nowadays, we've started to see an increase in the threat of random crime and street violence. Personal security is now a growing concern as corporate leaders, entertainers and ordinary citizens become victims so BMW has stepped up," he said.

Until now, armored vehicles in the

country were mostly products of after-market companies—businesses which take assembly line-made cars and customize them with armor and other features.

But unlike protection vehicles that are outfitted on an "aftermarket" basis, Scott said, the X5 Security has been designed, engineered and tested by BMW (in its Research and Engineering Center in Munich, Germany) to provide armored protection without compromising driving performance, crash durability or luxury offerings found in a typical X5.

## Integrated

The X5 Security's armoring is integrated in the vehicle right from the beginning of

the production process to ensure optimum protection of areas and cavities not reached when retrofitting armored vehicles.

Scott added that the X5 Security's neutral, secure driving characteristic is almost identical to that of the standard X5.

"BMW has put considerable emphasis on ensuring that the X5 Security is indistinguishable from its nonarmored counterpart. Its special armor is extremely difficult, even for trained eyes, to spot from the outside, resulting in an exceptionally discrete blend of security and driving pleasure," he said.

## Not compromised

But despite a slight increase in weight due to armoring, the dynamic driving qualities of

the X5 Security has not been compromised. Its 4.4-liter gasoline engine generates 324.4 horsepower, which enables it to reach 100 kph in just 7.8 seconds (compared to its unarmored counterpart's 7 seconds) and reach the electronically limited top speed of 210 kph (240 kph for the unarmored).

"And because the X5 Security is developed and produced exclusively by BMW, this not only guarantees high quality but also ensures complete support from its dealer and service network here," said Leana Farrelle of BMW Philippines corporate communications.

She also added that the X5 Security is equipped with BMW's patented xDrive all-wheel-drive system, which gives the vehicle impressive go-anywhere character.

## Paging Mayor Belmonte, MMDA

I'VE SAID IT MANY TIMES HERE BUT I WILL say it again anyway if only to stress the obvious. Most, if not all, of the traffic signs in the metropolis are placed on spots where traffic enforcers love to congregate.

You'll be a hypocrite if you say you don't know the reason for that—the enforcers' con-gregation, that is.

We see "Unloading and Loading" signs almost everywhere. Also, the "No Stopping Anytime" sign is as visible as the "No Parking" sign.

But come to think of it. Most, if not all, of them are placed on areas where it is convenient for both commuters and bus/jeepney drivers to go to.

Usually, the traffic signs are placed far away from where it is convenient for commuters to flag their public rides.

Take the case of the overpass. Isn't it convenient for commuters if "Loading/Unload-ing" signs are placed near an overpass?

But no, you will find the signs a bit farther from an overpass, thus inconveniencing commuters as they need to still walk another mile or two from the stairs of an overpass.

Such signs also lure the bus/jeepney drivers to load/unload their passengers at the foot of an overpass—right in front of the "No Loading/Unloading" signs—to ease the inconvenience of their customers.

Most of the time, traffic enforcers ignore violations. Again, if you don't know the reason, you were born yesterday.

Once in a while, traffic enforcers enforce the law. Again, if you don't know the reason, the reason, you were born yesterday.

Anyway, corruption is that makes traffic enforcers to either ignore the violations or enforce the law.

Bottom line is, the traffic signs are there, yes, but they are placed on areas that are actually convenient for bus/jeepney drivers passengers and traffic enforcers—if you know what I mean.

It is only when a traffic enforcer is either in a bad mood or new in the beat—or his superior suddenly gets temperamen-tal—that the bus/jeepney driver is inconvenienced through a sudden apprehension.

In short, corruption, my dear, is the other meaning of

## FULL TANK



Al Mendoza

those traffic signs in the city.

But not only are bus/jeepney drivers get inconvenienced by those signs but also private motorists like you and me.

For example, there's this newly placed sign at Edsa and Quezon Boulevard apportioning two routes to segregate public rides from private rides going to UP-Diliman.

Alas, at nightime, the signs can't be seen at all. Result: traffic enforcers have a field day apprehending unsuspecting private motorists, who, I was told, shell out a minimum of P100 each to avoid getting a citation ticket.

It is, of course, bad for us to bribe our way out of a fix. But this country has become so calloused to values that indifference has almost become a way of life.

Will the MMDA, if not Mayor Belmonte, or anybody, please do something about that corruption-laden spot underneath the flyover of

Edsa and Quezon Boulevard?

INNOVATIVE INNOVA. Not only is the Fortuner a big hit till now. Include the Innova, the locally manufactured Toyota Motor Philippines' IMV (Innovative Multipurpose Vehicle), which continues to hit top-selling charts after a sales record of 12,130 units in 2005—tops for the year. Each time I see someone buying an Innova—as what my good neighbor Jake P. Ayson did some weeks back—I remember Nobuharu Tabata, the TMP president, who will turn over the reins to Hiroshi Ito today, Feb. 15, in an expectedly glittering ceremony presided over by the TMP chair himself, George S.K. Ty. It was Tabata-san who personally pushed for the Innova to "be the logical choice of Filipinos because every sale of it means a continued strong employment rate for the country." I'm impressed! As Danny "Sir John" Isla loves to say about Tabata-san, which Ariel de Jesus and Elijah Sue Marcial would nod approvingly: "His legacy of four Triple Crowns for Toyota in his four years as TMP president is a benchmark in the motorizing industry." Indeed, it is.

Again, sayonara, Tabata-san.

QUOTE ME. You drive unnecessarily fast, you might as well necessarily crash.



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

## INVITATION TO BID

The NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC) invites interested bidders for the sale of its property with a total land area of 8,277 square meters located along Gaffud St., Barangay Suyong, Echague, Isabela on the basis of "as is, where it is" basis. The minimum bid is set at P1,269,400.00 inclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT).

Interested parties may register and secure Bidding Guidelines upon payment of P500.00 which is non-refundable beginning February 20, 2006 at

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

C/o The Secretariat

Disposal Committee

7th Floor National Development Company Bldg. 116 Torreblanca St., Saucedo Village, Makati City Direct Line (02) 840-13-36 (02) 840-11-47 Trunk Line (02) 840-46-36 Locals 212, 267 & 269

A pre-bid conference shall be held on March 6, 2006 9:30 AM at the Alberto Barretto Hall, National Development Company Building.

Bids must be sealed and submitted between 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM of March 10, 2006 labeled and addressed as follows:

The CHAIRMAN

Disposal Committee

National Development Company

7th Floor NDC Building

116 Torreblanca St., Saucedo Village, Makati City

CODE: Suyong, Echague Property

The opening of sealed bids prepared in the prescribed forms and accompanied by a 10% bid bond is scheduled on March 10 at 2:01 PM at the Alberto Barretto Hall, NDC Building in the presence of all bidders(s) and/or their authorized representatives. Bids received after 2:00 PM shall no longer be accepted.

The NDC Disposal Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bids or waive any of the formalities required, or accept only such bids which are deemed advantageous to NDC.

Disposal Committee Chairman

(PDI February 13, 14 &amp; 15, 2006)



## INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court through the Committee on Bids invites prospective bidders who are authorized distributors and/or authorized resellers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

Name of Project	Approved Budget	Source of Funding
LOT 1 - OFFICE SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 13,862,100.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 2 - PRINTING SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,155,305.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 3 - MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,155,304.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 4 - HEWLETT PACKARD (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 2,684,980.10	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 5 - BROTHER TOWER AND INK (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,117,129.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 6 - EPSON RIBBON (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 588,424.00	General Appropriations Act 2006

## PERIOD OF DELIVERY:

Twenty five (25) calendar days after issuance of Purchase Order (P.O.)

## SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

## A. FOR LOT 1, LOT 2, AND LOT 3:

## I. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference will be held on:

Date: 01 MARCH 2006, Wednesday  
Venue: Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faure St., Ermita Manila  
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 1)  
2:00 p.m. (for LOT 2)  
3:00 p.m. (for LOT 3)

## II. SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OPENING OF BIDS

On the bidding, the legal requirements for eligibility of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, to be held on:

Date: 15 March 2006, Wednesday  
Venue: Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faure St., Ermita, Manila  
10:00 a.m. (for LOT 1)  
11:00 a.m. (for LOT 2)  
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 3)

## B. FOR LOT 4, LOT 5, AND LOT 6:

## I. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference will be held on:

Date: 03 MARCH 2006, Friday  
Venue: Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faure St., Ermita, Manila  
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 4)  
2:00 p.m. (for LOT 5)  
3:00 p.m. (for LOT 6)

## II. SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OPENING OF BIDS

On the bidding, the legal requirements for eligibility of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, to be held on:

Date: 17 March 2006, Friday  
Venue: Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faure St., Ermita, Manila  
10:00 a.m. (for LOT 4)  
11:00 a.m. (for LOT 5)  
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 6)

Prospective bidders must not be related to the head of the procuring entity or any member of the Committee on Bids or its Secretariat either by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree.

Interested bidders may secure eligibility requirements and bid documents from The Secretariat, Committee on Bids, Property Division, 3rd Floor Annex Building, Supreme Court, after payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for LOT 1, LOT 2, LOT 3, LOT 4, and LOT 5, and Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) for LOT 6, prior to the conduct of pre-bid conference. For additional information, the bidders may contact the Secretary, Atty. Emilia R.C. Cabarrus at telephone no. 526-1279 or Ms. Norma C. Jose at tel. no. 526-5419.

PNC Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to award the bidder or bidders, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

The Committee on Bids reserves the right to: 1) reject any or all bids; 2) waive any defects or irregularities therein; 3) or accept any bid or offers which it may consider to be the most advantageous and beneficial to the government.

15 February 2006

(Sgd.) JOSE P. PEREZ

PDI-Feb. 18 & 22, 2006

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
Mamis Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines  
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO Tel No. 853-6001 to 14/853-1328 • Fax 840-1575

Section I. To Apply for Eligibility and to Bid  
Bataan Geothermal Power Plant Project (Fall Turnkey 20 MW Geothermal Power Plant)

EDC 08-008  
EDC 08-009

PNOC Energy Development Corporation now calls for the submission of offers of interest for the Bataan Geothermal Power Plant Project (Fall Turnkey 20 MW Geothermal Power Plant) under project number EDC 08-008 (hereinafter referred to as the "Project") located in Bataan, Philippines.

The Project is a joint venture between PNOC Energy Development Corporation (the "Lead Contractor") and the Government of the Philippines (the "Government").

The Lead Contractor is responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the Project.

The Project is located in Bataan, Philippines, and is expected to commence in 2008.

The Project is expected to generate approximately 20 megawatts of electricity.

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## BUSINESS

# Canada firms eye RP investment

## Mission looking at former US military bases as possible sites

By Ronnel W. Domingo

CANADIAN INVESTORS ARE ON THE LOOKOUT for possible sites for Filipino-Canadian firms.

Armand Arreza, administrator of Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said yesterday that a business mission was in the country to look at the suitability of former American military bases as investment locations.

The mission included representatives from 25 organizations that belong to the Philippine Chamber of Commerce of Toronto; Philippine-Canada Business Council; and Manitoba Business Council.

Led by Pil-Canadians, the six-day business tour kicked off last Monday with a visit to the Subic freeport.

The mission will also visit Camp John Hay in Baguio City and Clark Field in Pampanga,

as well as tourist destinations like Bohol, Bacolod in Cebu.

"The (visitors) broached the idea of investing in a retirement village for Canadians who find the Philippines a very suitable place to spend their twilight years," Arreza said.

He added that Subic was "conducive for retirees due to its security, accessibility, natural attractions, amenities, activities and a 24-hour medical team to ensure that retirees would certainly feel at home."

Arreza said Subic already host three retirement enclaves that cater to the Japanese market.

Relatedly, Arreza said the Philippine Retirement Authority on Monday scouted for a location in Subic suitable for yet another retirement village for Japanese citizens.

PRA is a government agency mandated to attract foreign nationals and former Filipino

citizens to spend their retirement years in the country.

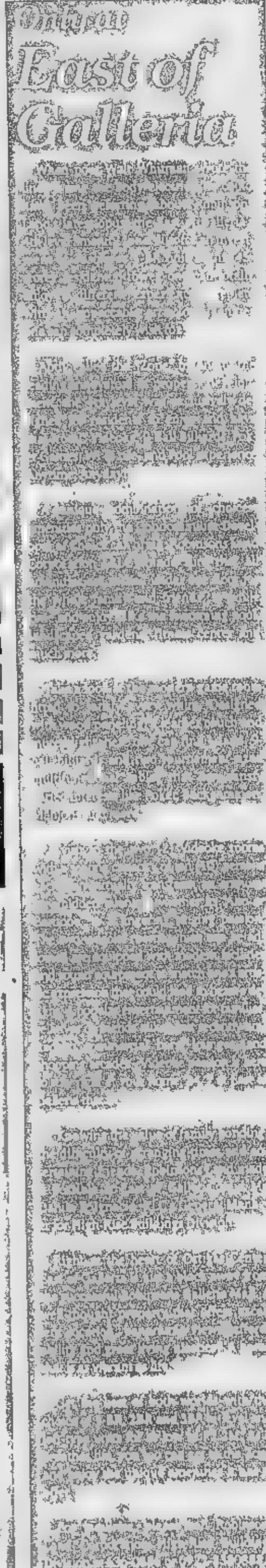
The agency's thrust is to help accelerate economic development, contribute to the foreign currency reserve, and provide the most attractive package for foreigner-retirees.

The Subic administrator said PRA Chair Edgardo Aglipay planned to tap private firms for the marketing and operation of the venture.

The PRA is considering large parcels of land, like those in the Greyback area in Binetican, the Kalayaan housing area and an area beside the former George Dewey High School.

An official familiar with the matter said PRA and SBMA were expected to sign a memorandum of agreement for a retirement project within the month.

## The Amenity Zone:



## A LEISURE STROLL TO *Galleria*

A unique and refreshing lifestyle is now here in the heart of Ortigas Center.

Welcome to East of Galleria, a 45-storey residential tower located in the midst of the bustling business district. It is conveniently located beside the very successful Robinsons Galleria Mall to cater to the residents' daily needs. Minutes away from major roads like EDSA and C-5, it is also within the vicinity of malls, banks, institutions and other major establishments.

East of Galleria truly embodies the ideal of comfort and convenience, offering the best of both worlds with the choice of either bi-level or loft-type units. Available in one, two and three-bedroom units, East of Galleria assures residents of utmost privacy in condo living as the master's bedroom is located a level above the dining, kitchen and living areas. High ceilings, airy atmosphere and expansive glass windows feature breathtaking views of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club as well as a multitude of magnificent skylines.

At the heart of the busy city lies a comfortable and affordable home, here at East of Galleria

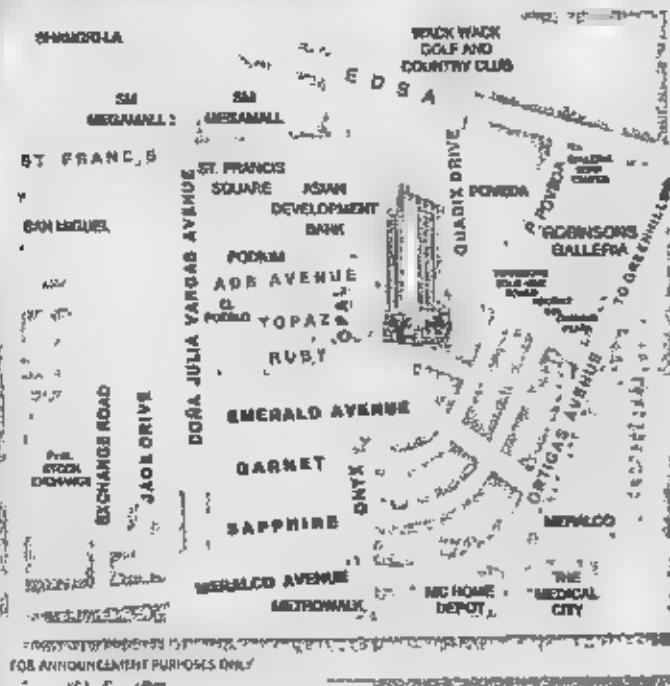
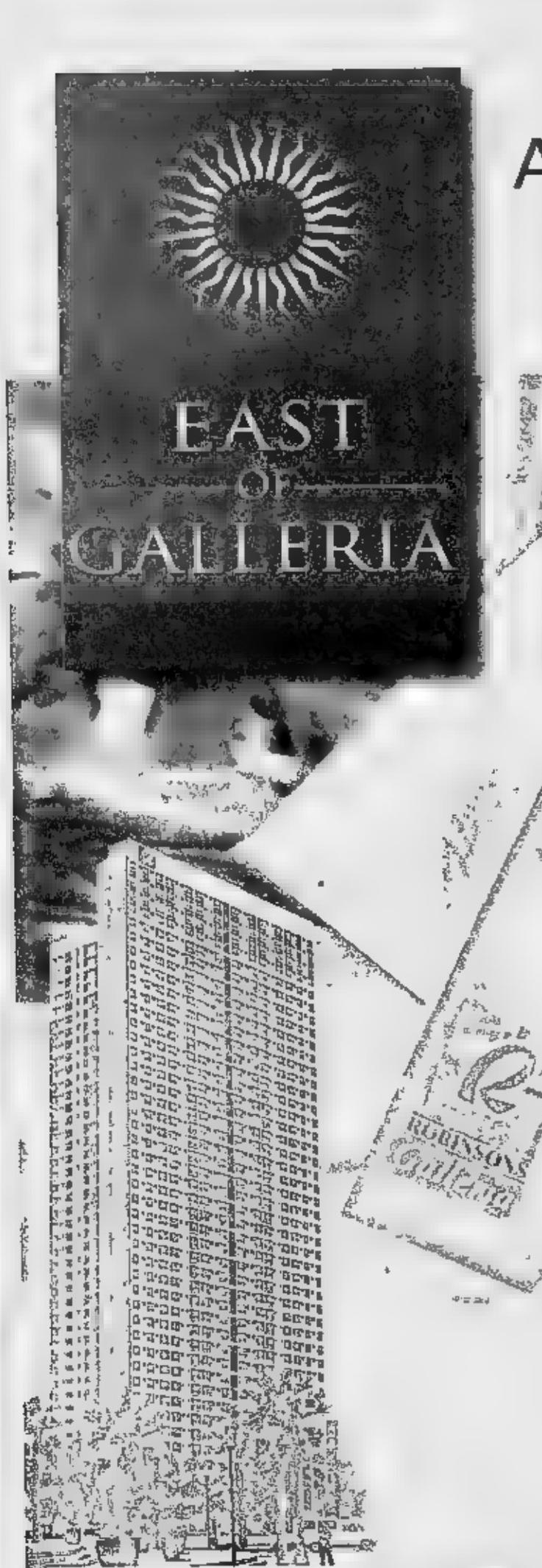
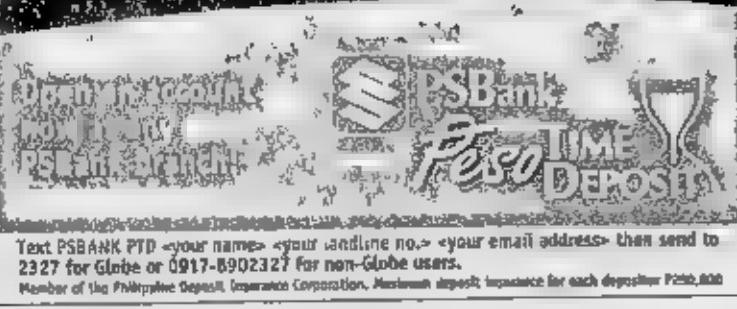
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100,000 - 499,999	5.500	5.625	5.750
500,000 - 999,999	5.750	6.000	6.250
1,0MM - 4,99MM	6.000	6.250	6.500
5,0MM - 9,99MM	6.375	6.500	6.625
10,0MM and up	6.500	6.625	6.750

Also inquire about our 1, 2 or 3-year term Peso Time Deposit.

\*Quoted rates are subject to change without prior notice.

Rates are on per annum basis and net of documentary stamp taxes.

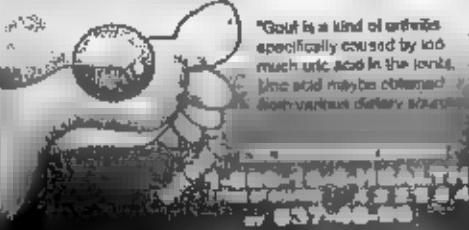


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WEDNESDAY,  
FEBRUARY 15, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

CII

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Text us your feedback:  
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2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso  
Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

# LIFESTYLE

## Promastic 2bU!

IT'S PROM TIME ONCE again! 2bU! wants to become a part of your special night. We have beauty tips and dress suggestions for girls. We even went to a fashion show to pick out numbers that would

add oomph to your prom moment. And if you join our special prom contest, you have a chance of winning a great prize: having Shu Uemura's Xeng Zulueta do your makeup on the night of

your prom! To be you! We don't want to leave the guys out, either. We have prom dos and don'ts to make sure your prom goes smoothly and your night is as memorable as possible. Enjoy!



GLAM up in a black-and-white dress with matching gloves for a classy look.

## Princess for a day

Text by Alison W. Lopez  
Photos by Rudy Esperas

FOR A DRESS YOU'D probably wear only once or twice in your life, how much would you (or your parents) spend?

Not much, we guess, especially since you'd need matching shoes, bag, accessories, plus some prepping up for the big night. Whew.

SM Department Store, fortunately, offers more choices to budget-conscious teens in need of a quick but sensible fix.

Veering from its previous "safer" styles, SM's prom collection '06 is indeed promising—with more sorbet colors, exciting twists, even daring cuts.

At the recent fashion show at SM Makati to launch the new line, pretty young things from different schools romped in mostly tube or spaghetti-strapped, multilayered dresses. Flounce skirts also dominated the collection, while classic, black-and-white striped dresses with satin ribbons cinched at the waist stood out.

What must be the biggest surprise was a tiered dress with uneven hemline, cut dangerously above the thighs. The model seems to have worn one of the samples that were a tad smaller, but the actual merchandise's hemlines are said to have been lowered already. So girls, make sure the dress fits well especially since they only come in small, medium and large. There are no plus-sizes yet for this collection. Adjustments would also have to be done outside.

Cocktail dresses, other semi-formals and clubwear (like cute bubble skirts) are also available at the girl's teen wear section. Matching shoes, bags and accessories such as tiaras and headbands can also be found at the store's other sections.

Young gentlemen would have to content themselves with the usual suits and barongs the store has since these were not included in the prom collection.

At P999.75-P1,499.75, the young ladies' formals are a good steal especially when your prom is just three days away. There may also

be a few surprises in store.



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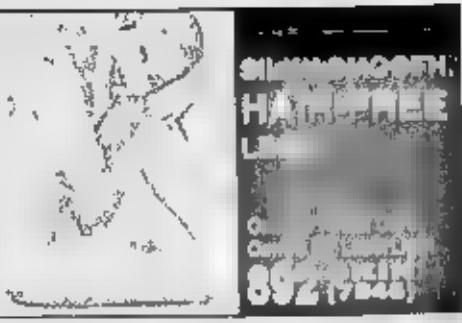
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See posters and flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCL Form No. 0919, Series of 2005



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**CELEBRITY** model Pia Romero looks every inch a princess in a light-pink frock and bejeweled headband.



SAY hello to a lemon-yellow gown that flatters fair young ladies.



DASHING Dominic Roco in a bright-on-dark ensemble



STRAPLESS two-tone formal



EMPIRE-CUT, shimmery number with ribbon accent



SIMPLE peach confection

SM Department Store  
and Avel Bacudio join forces  
to make every teenager's  
dream night come true

## Princess for a day

From page C1

be a chance you'd run into somebody wearing the same thing, so make sure to add a dash of accessories to personalize your outfit.

### Semi-haute couture

If, however, your parents have a few thousand more to spare for their *unica hya*, Avel Bacudio's special prom line for SM is the perfect choice. The 29-year-old designer deftly produced lovely separates in dyed chiffon and duchess satin, albeit on short notice.

"You can even mix and match it," suggests Bacudio, so that instead of slipping into an all-pink or all-blue gown, you can choose the aqua tube top to go with the pink skirt instead.

Bacudio says he created classic embellished tops with skirts that have unconventional features like torn fringes. The designer also made it a point to incorporate a drawstring back so the wearer can adjust it to the right fit.

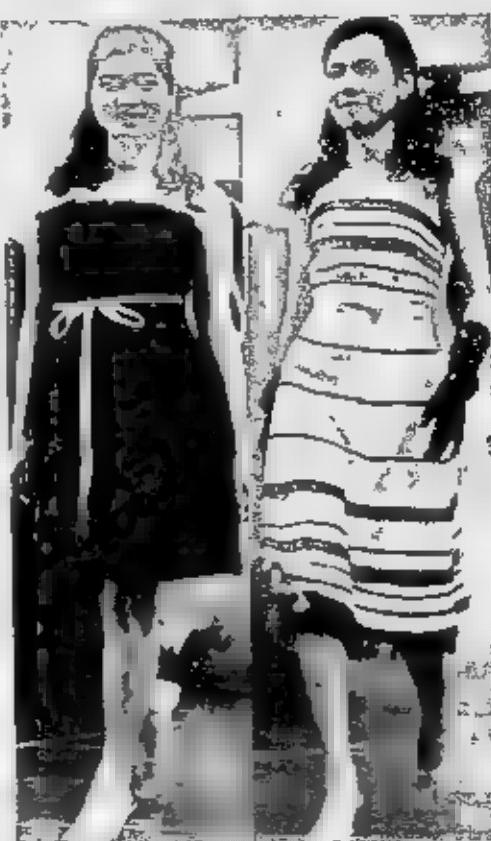
His prom collection will be displayed only at SM Makati, and has one small, two mediums, one large sizes in stock. If none of these princess-y frocks on the rack fit snugly, you can contact Bacudio (tel. 4350578) for a fitting or some alterations and just wait for three days to get the outfit.



BACUDIO pairs a classic tube top with an unconventional "torn" skirt for an updated prom look.



DRAWSTRING back makes it easy to get the right fit.



LITTLE black dress with dainty ribbon belt



AN EQUALY stunning version of the black-and-white '50s-inspired dress



BUBBLE skirts are perfect for the after-party.



PRETTY-IN-PINK creation by young designer Avel Bacudio

The designer's dresses carried by SM will set you back around P15,000—definitely not cheap, but still, it's half of what he usually charges for a made-to-order prom dress. Bacudio also offers tailored barongs and suits for guys who want something more than the usual.

And before we forget, you'll also get a 20-percent discount on hair and makeup at David's Salon for every purchase at the Girl's Teen Wear in all SM branches.

Isn't that just great? Now you can get those sexy curly locks via digital perm at a steal, too.

These days, it does pay to be practical—especially when you have irresistible choices like these.

## Stylish retail choices

WITH PROM SEASON fast approaching, it's time for teenagers to comb the metro in search of the perfect outfit for that one special night.

For teens (and parents) who don't want to blow a lot of time and money having a gown or suit made, buying retail is the more practical choice.

Debenhams, one of the U.K.'s largest retail stores, is holding an in-store promo for loyal fans until



THOMAS Nash formal shirts  
Feb. 25 For a minimum purchase, buyers are entitled to a gift certificate to make their prom night more special.

Looking for the perfect accessory—match your gown! A minimum purchase of P5,000 in Debut Womenswear will entitle you to a free P500 gift voucher—enough to buy a pretty necklace or two.

Guys aren't left out, either. By a combined purchase of one tie and one Thomas Nash formal shirt gets a free P250 gift voucher.

Visit Debenhams at 3/L, Shangri La Plaza Mall, Cal 6329802, 6327156.

Bianca Consunji



CONFIDENTLY CHIC: The new Twenty-Two B.C. white polo dress, P1,999; Date, P1,999; denim jacket, P1,999.



STRAPLESS rainbow chiffon dress with asymmetrical hem, P1,999.75; cowl-neck rainbow chiffon dress, P1,999.75;



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CLEAN and flattering style lines with just the right touch of detail and color, from Debut Womenswear

## Kickout ensembles

THE INGREDIENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL prom are simple: chin-up confidence, a standout style, the perfect dress and a hottie for a date.

Twenty-Two BC shows that your prom doesn't have to be a minor "Stepford Wives" party, where you abandon your own style for a night just to blend in. In fact, it can really be fun dressing up for the ball if you stick to the look you're most comfortable in. Here are some ideas to help you out.

Pretty and romantic. Laces and ribbons in pastels, a sweet corsage, pretty makeup and a charming smile. Get romantic in a strapless dress that shows off your shoulders. Feel like Cinderella as you enter the scene.

Classic elegance. When there's no need to try so hard to catch attention since your mere presence is all the party needs, relax in a sophisticated dress that allows you to move around in a style that's truly yours.

City chic. For no-nonsense gals who wouldn't be caught wearing an off-season outfit, a halter top that spells sexy, bold and

confident is the best bet. Wear a short tea-length dress to show everyone that you are about to enjoy the night big time!

Pabulously eclectic. Hate to conform? Play the big night in a daring and unexpected piece. Try a tie-dyed dress that's edgy enough for disco dancing yet soft enough to make your date drool during the slow dance.

Minimalist glam. Simplicity and glam go together. A minimal yet stunning ball gown, a smashing hairstyle, and a poised walk are all you need as you face the crowd as prom queen.

Still, whatever style you choose, remember that enjoying the night is all that matters.

Twenty-Two BC also offers loads of privileges: free alteration services on all regularly priced items; a lifetime 10-percent discount card upon accumulation of P8,000 worth of purchase; a 20-percent birthday discount for those in the mailing list; store and event notification through mailers, e-mail, and text; and a 24-hour hotline for queries, sug-

gestions, and complaints (0916-6957273).

Visit Twenty-Two B.C. only at the SM Department Store Boutique Squares of the following SM Malls: SM City North Edsa, SM Makati, SM Cubao, SM Megamall, SM Manila, SM City Cebu, SM Bacoor, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM City Mandurriao, Harrison Plaza and SM Mall of Asia-Bay City. Visit [www.22bc.com.ph](http://www.22bc.com.ph).

To know more about Solo's latest collection, visit [www.solo.com.ph](http://www.solo.com.ph), or visit the following branches: Glorietta 1, Alabang Town Center, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Sta. Rosa, SM Centerpoint, SM Manila, SM Pampanga, Alimall Cubao, Festival Super Mall and Abanao Square Baguio.

GOWNS BY TWENTYTWO BC  
MEN'S OUTFITS BY SOLO

STYLING BY HARRY SOLER, STEPHAFZELUS AND MIKE JUNGSCLAGER OF CALCARNE'S

# Hi-tech Hair

By Pam Pastor

**Y**OU KNOW YOU'RE LIVING IN A hi-tech world when even salons go digital.

If you're sick of spending tedious hours having your hair rebonded, if your straight hair has become blah and boring, if you want to breathe life into your limp locks, here are two words for you: digital perm.

Yes, digital perm, not your regular run-of-the-mill perm. What's the difference, you might wonder? "The curls are shinier. They're bigger. There's movement so it looks sexier. Mas may bounce and there's no frizz," said Cherry Reyes, who runs Essensuals Toni & Guy in 6750.

And, unlike the regular perm, your digital perm will last for only three months, which means you're not tied down to a lifetime of curliness—you can change your mind.

The secret lies in the process and in the tools used. "We use ceramic rods—they seal the moisture in the hair so the hair doesn't become frizzy," Cherry said.

Digital perm isn't the only thing that makes Essensuals Toni & Guy different from your regular salon. They offer a unique experience—from start to finish.

Clients are welcomed with a lovely massage, thanks to physical therapists who are part of the salon's staff. The salon also has private rooms—complete with your own cable TV—if you want to enjoy your treatments away from everyone else.

And if your treatment crosses into lunchtime, Glorietta and its whole myriad of restaurants are just a few steps away—you can always have food delivered or someone can pick up lunch for you.

The digital perm starts with a shampoo and a cut. Layers need to be added to your hair to show off the curls properly. It's important for the hair to be cut before the perm because cutting the hair after would make the curls pop.

Pre-perm solution is then added to your hair. Then another solution follows—one that softens the hair so your stylist can mold it into beautiful curls after.

Another thing which makes the digital perm different from the regular perm is that the solution is washed off before the actual perming starts.

## Perm proper

The ceramic rods are then secured to your hair and covered with asbestos pads to protect your scalp from the heat. This is where the digital part comes in—each ceramic rod is hooked up to a heating machine.

The waiting time will depend on the texture of your hair. I have unbelievably thick hair so my time was a little longer than normal. After the rods are removed, the hair is washed and blown dry again and neutralizer is applied. Then, your beautiful curls will be revealed.

You can request for smaller or bigger curls. Hair products to keep your curls in tip-top shape will be recommended.

I've been using Bed Head's Small Talk and I love it equally for its effects and its delicious grape bubble gum smell.

I've also happily discovered that even during the few times I forgot to take my hair arsenal with me on out-of-town trips, my curls still look pretty even without products.

During the first few days after the perm, the curls would tighten only to become loose with the passing of days. And unlike some hair treatments with effects that fade over time—the digital perm looks better and better even as weeks pass.

After living with painstakingly rebonded hair for three years and not being able to go out of the house until every strand is dried perfectly in place, I realized with glee that digitally permmed hair is wash and wear.

I can pop into the bathroom, pop back out, get ready in five minutes and run out of the house without worrying about having a massive mess on my head.

## Biggest joy

Letting the air dry my hair is no longer a horrendous mistake. In fact, my biggest joy now is



THREE different looks achieved by digital perm



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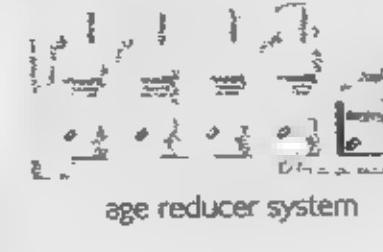
2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005

## great white ways!



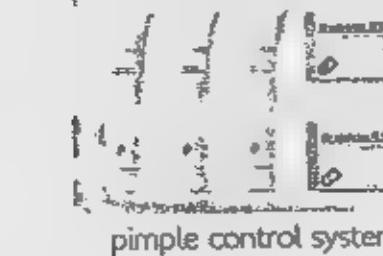
whitening system

## youthfulness you can preserve!

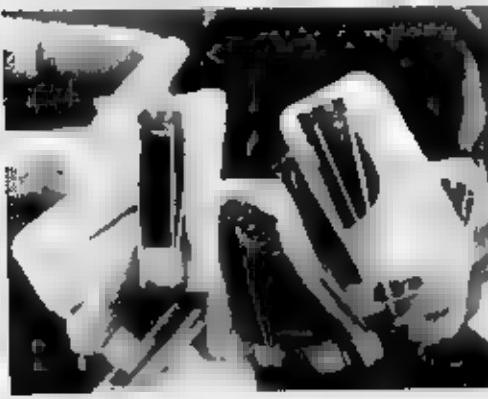


age reducer system

## flawlessness you can achieve!



pimple control system



HAIR is secured with ceramic rods and the scalp is protected with asbestos pads.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS



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STYLIST Christy works her magic

Take a break  
from shampoo  
commercial  
straight hair.  
This year, curly  
is the way to go



And when a client came in, asking for a digital perm because she was unsatisfied with the perm she had at another salon just days ago, Cherry and Christy talked seriously about her case—as physicians would—before asking the woman to come back in a few weeks.

"It wouldn't be good for her hair," they said. "Besides, she wouldn't be able to fully appreciate the effects of the digital perm."

People like to think of them as stylists, I like to think of them as hair doctors.

Essensuals Toni & Guy is at G/F, 6750 Ayala Ave., Makati City. Operating hours are from 9 a.m.-8 p.m., on Mondays-Saturdays; and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Sundays. Call 8128559 or 8128002.

E-mail the author at [pastor@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:pastor@inquirer.com.ph)

THE HAIR doctors  
are in. Essensuals  
Toni & Guy in 6750

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS



THE AUTHOR with  
Cherry Reyes, Toni &  
Guy creative and  
managing director

## Have prom-pretty hair

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR hair digitally permed for your prom, do it a few days before your special night so you can have time to adjust to your new look.

Choose a look that is both comfortable and easy to fix. Think about it: if your complex dance move shakes your hair out of place, will you be able to salvage the look in the bathroom?

Up or down? If you can't choose between a sweeping updo or having your locks framing your face, bring a photo of your dress (or bring the dress itself) and ask your stylist to help you decide.

Schedule a salon date with friends—getting ready for the prom is half the fun and the fun would be tripled when shared with your closest girlfriends.

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Our prescription! Hortaleza, M.D. Whitening System! Gives your skin radiance by day and lightening by night. Used regularly, this system works hard to effectively lighten blemishes and dark spots while providing protection from the skin-darkening effects of the sun and the environment. So when it comes to skin whitening, go with Hortaleza, M.D. Whitening System!

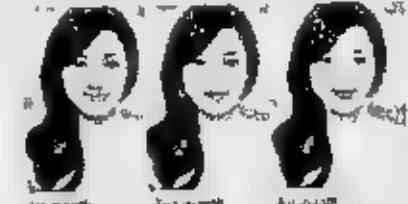
Get a Whitening starter kit for only P299!

### Whitening you can swallow

Hortaleza, M.D. Illuminous Whitening Capsule. Achieving porcelain-white, celebrity complexion and making it last is a process that goes beyond the usual skin-deep solutions. Thanks to the discovery of Glutathione, getting more permanent results has finally become so effortless.

Glutathione is essentially a natural, immunity-boosting tripeptide amino acid that is found in the body. Regular intake of Glutathione has been tested and proven for its positive "effect" whitening of dark skin. No wonder, it has been dubbed as the "prescription-of-the-moment" by Hollywood dermatologists, thus earning its status as one of the most coveted, "to-die-for" beauty arsenals among celebrities, socialites—and practically anyone who can afford it.

However, with the cutting-edge expertise of Hortaleza, M.D., the once-prhibitively priced Glutathione has now made accessible with new Hortaleza, M.D. Illuminous Whitening Capsule. Enjoy the multi-benefits of Glutathione whitening and anti-aging, plus Vitamins C and E with Alpha Lipid Acid. All in one capsule for only P3975 each! That's 50% more affordable than other brands! Get it in packs of 30's and 10's at all HBC Home of Beauty Exclusive Stores nationwide. Now isn't that illuminating news for your skin!



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See store for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0637 / Series of 2006.

# LIFESTYLE



## Prom dos and don'ts

By Cheryl Tiu  
2bU! Correspondent

IT'S THE TIME OF THE YEAR THAT EVERYONE IN HIGH SCHOOL has been waiting for prom season. Whether it's sophomore night, junior prom or senior ball, everyone's excited to dress up and waltz and look like princes and princesses for the night.

To make the night as worry-free as possible, 2bU! has come up with a list of things that should—and shouldn't—be done at your formal to make sure the most highly anticipated event of the school year turns out to be the most memorable as well.

### Do

- Prepare a camera to capture the photogenic memories. Even if there is a professional photographer, it's a lot more fun to candidly capture the night. Just make sure you don't lose your camera, especially when you're out on the dance floor.
- Tell your parents where you are going and who you are going with. This way, you'll be able to have fun and not get in trouble with them afterward.
- Make sure that appointments for hair, nails, makeup, etc. are taken care of a week, or at least several days, before prom.
- Start breaking in and practice walking on prom shoes at least a week before prom so when the big night arrives, there won't be any sore feet—and a lot of tripping.
- Ask for the color of your date's dress and tux so you don't clash on the big night.
- Have spare cash just in case something pops up that might require extra money.
- Make sure everything fits in advance. Do not wait until the day before.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

**Don't break up  
with your boyfriend  
before the prom.  
Do it afterward**

- Engage in good conversations with your date. If you really don't have anything to talk about, try involving the other couples at your table into a group conversation, instead of sulking at your plate.
- Have a good time, make wise choices, and enjoy yourself.

### Don't

- Forget to pick up your date.
- Forget the corsage or boutonniere.
- Ask to see your date's dress or tux before the big day—it's supposedly bad luck.
- Overdo the perfume or cologne. Please don't bathe in it.
- Tell your date that she looks better without makeup and hairspray. This is not the right time to tell her that you prefer the "natural" look.
- Sit at home and sulk, even if you don't have a date. Go stag or with a group of friends and have a blast.
- Break up with your boyfriend/girlfriend during the week of prom. If you think the breakup is coming, just bite your tongue and try to wait a few days after prom. Prom is a memory that lasts a lifetime, and you don't want it to be clouded by a bad breakup.

E-mail the author at [choice\\_dominique@yahoo.com](mailto:choice_dominique@yahoo.com)



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 7081 Series of 2005

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6801, Series of 2005



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AUDI







## GLOWING MAKEUP

**Simply sweet**

On Princess, Xeng aimed for simple, fresh-faced look. After prepping her skin with light foundation and powder, she lined Princess' eyes with the blue end of the eye light pencil and intensified the color with the P600 Blue Ring pressed eye shadow. After that, Xeng applied the Sakura glow-on, a fresh pink shade on the apples of her cheeks. She then finished it off with a swipe of the Daisy sweet lip gloss.

**Sweet and sexy**

For a natural but striking look, Xeng evened out Danie's skin with Water Perfect foundation. After patting on the Eye Jelly in Gold, Xeng lined Danie's eyes with pressed eye shadows in P200 (Orange Sorbet) and ME100 (Strawberry Mousse). After a sweep of the Apricot glow-on on Danie's cheeks, Xeng applied more Eye Jelly on the center of Danie's lips and topped it with Daisy sweet lip gloss for a fuller pout.

MAKEUP BY XENG ZULJETA  
HAIR BY TATIN YANG

MODELS: PRINCESS VIOLAGO, DANIE MENDOZA AND JOY HENDRICKSON

**Sugary sweet**

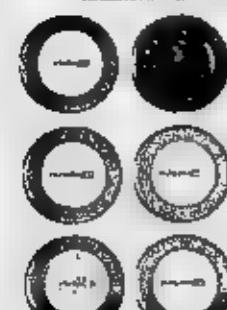
For a more avant-garde look, Xeng used a host of colors from the Sweet Mode collection. After prepping her skin with Water Perfect foundation, Xeng brushed on the Sugar glow-on to make Joy's skin glow. She then patted Joy's eyes with Eye Jelly in order to make color adhere better to the eyelids, and used a combination of four eye shadows (ME100 Strawberry Mousse, P200 Orange Sorbet, P300 Lemon Curd, and P600 Blue Ring), taking care to blend the color carefully for a water-color-inspired effect. She finished off with a sweep of Apricot blush, eye jelly and sweet lip gloss in Plumeria.



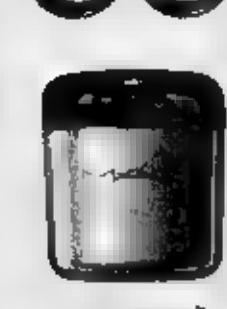
CHECK out Sweet Mode at Shu Uemura counters in Rustan's Giorietta and Shangri-La.

**MACHINGERIE**

If you exude natural but glamorous vibes, MAC Lingerie is the collection for you. With makeup colors that look and feel like second skin, Lingerie is great for prom-ready girls who want to be able to use the makeup they wear after a night of glitter and frothy gowns.



The collection contains new colors of MAC's best-selling products. You won't go wrong with their eye shadows, which last long and in colors that stay put the whole night (no disappearing act when you thank the Academy for your prom queen crown). Try the eye shadows in Slip Pink (pink with pearl) and Taupeless (lilac with diamond cluster).



Also try their Pro Pigments, which are all-around powders for the eyes, lips, cheeks, and décolletage. God-damn, a rosy pink shade with gold pearl, is the best all-around color. The pigment also comes in Lovely Lily (lac with red pearl) and Pink Opal (ivory tinted with pink).



The show-stopper, however, is the Mineralize Skinfinish. This dome-shaped brush is not only pretty to look at, it gives one of the best natural flushes from powder blush. Petticoat, a pale rose shade with gold and amber shimmer, looks great on any skin tone. Naked You, a pale beige shade with brown streaks, is a good highlighter.



Of course, a MAC collection will never be complete without their trademark lipstick and lip gloss. Check out Pink Marlin, which will go well with knockout black gowns, and Of Course! a frosted coral shade.

The Lingerie collection is available at MAC counters in Rustan's Giorietta and Shangri-La.

# Prom-perfect makeup

Text by Bianca Consunji  
2bU Correspondent  
Photos by Niko Cid

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, FIVE years ago. A young buck from the nearby all boys' school stood nervously at the foot of the stairs, waiting for me to finish my graceful flight in my glittering blue gown. He looked up with tender eyes and said, "You look better without makeup."

No, the rest of the night didn't go too well, either. But while it wasn't exactly the most tactful thing in the world to say, he was right. The matte brown eye shadow, earth-toned blush and red lipstick made me look like someone else (say, somebody's spinster aunt).

While five years may not seem like such a long time, makeup styles have greatly improved since then.

E-mail biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

**Do you love the Sweet Mode look?** Go to your prom sporting the prettiest makeup this side of town courtesy of Shu Uemura. 2bU's choosing one girl (and a couple of her friends) to be made over by Xeng Zuljeta for the prom. All you have to do is e-mail your name, school, contact details, a clear photo, and a short essay on why you deserve the makeover to 2bu.beauty@gmail.com. Be as creative as you can!

For instance, it is now possible to wear bright colors such as blue, pink, orange, and green without looking like a clown. Girls don't have to be gritty or loud, and not everyone has to wear red lipstick for nights out. Also, many high school teens now are more receptive to themes such as "masquerade," so it's easier to create a look for a particular theme.

2bU chose three of the country's top makeup brands to help high school girls get ready for their prom. Check out the latest offerings from Shu Uemura, MAC and Lancôme.

These days, there's no reason to look like someone's spinster aunt. And it'll save you the trouble of blackening your date's eye if he insists on saying that your makeup's ugly.

**L'ANGOME ENCHANTRESS**

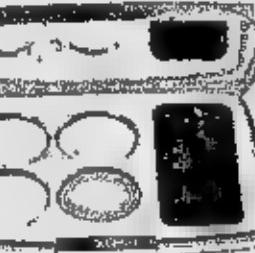
inspired by Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Lancôme's Enchantress collection is perfect for girls who want a fairytale prom.

The look is all about shimmer, ethereal colors, and sweet-looking shine, so play out your princess fantasies because this makeup is meant to be worn with a tiara.

The Petite Bohème shimmer powder, for instance, creates a subtle glow to highlight specific areas on the face and shoulder. Think Galadriel from "Lord of the Rings." It's available in 3 shades: silver, gold and bronze.

Juicy Tubes, Lancôme's best-selling product, are perfect for glossy lips without that overly sticky feeling (the yummy flavors don't hurt, of course.) The limited-edition colors for this season include peach (for the nude look) and a pinky-plum shade.

The Color Focus Palette includes four jewel-toned eye shadows in purples, pinks, and shiny whites in a floral palette pretty enough to whip out during the prom. These colors are versatile enough to go smokey or clean, and last long, too. Finish off the look with Crayon Khol Waterproof liner, a long-lasting liner available in four metallic colors: silver, gold, bronze and blue.



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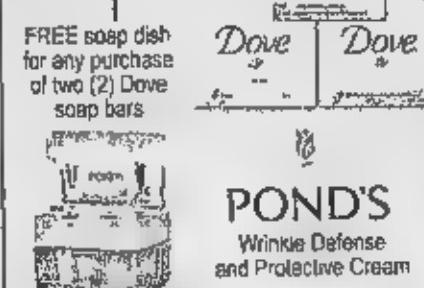
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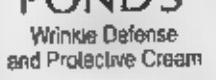
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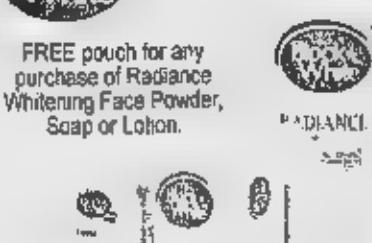
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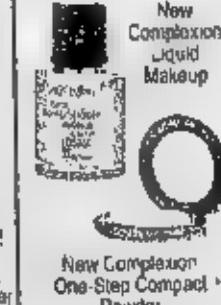
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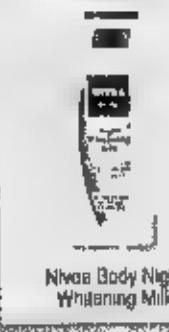
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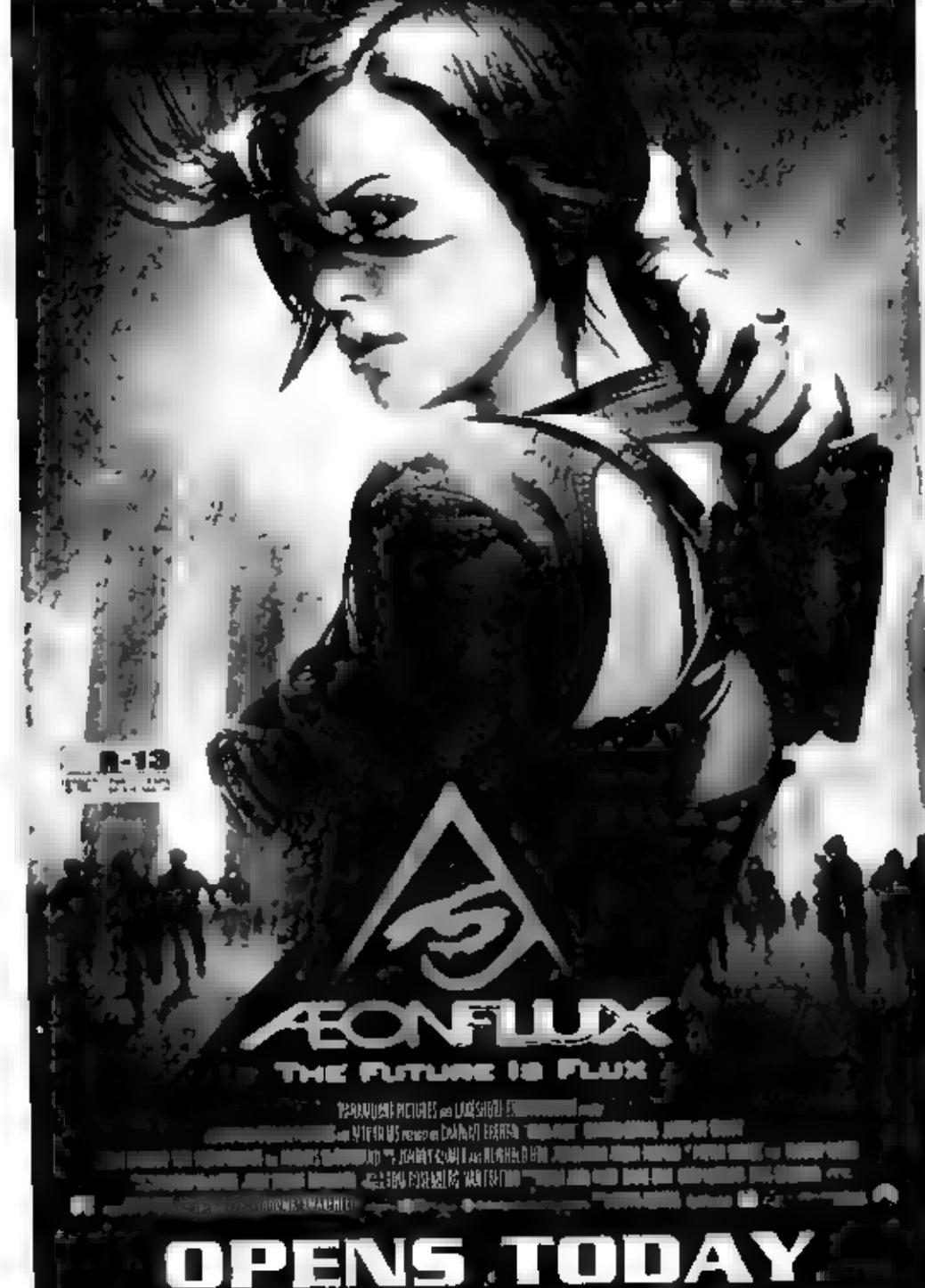
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2008

# Cool, boy

By Paolo Lorenzana  
2BUL Contributor

PROM IS LIKE THE HOLY COMMUNION OF

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**OPEN TODAY**

dating—a rite of passage that, with all its expectations and reservations, is an experience in itself.

But before you slip into your suit and strap

Your prom isn't the last night you'll ever be in the presence of the opposite sex, so take it easy, tiger

that Velcro corsage onto your date's wrist, here are some things to consider so you can avoid cringing at the memory of one of the most significant nights of your high school life.

### Dos

Your interest in your date's parents should correlate with your interest in taking her out of their house. Arriving early enough to pick your date up and assuring them of who you are and your night's itinerary is like collateral for bringing their daughter back.

Anticipate and deliver. From matching the

color of her dress to her corsage, taking care of the post-prom snack tab to the music that plays in your car and opening its doors for her—always be one step ahead as your date's attendant and bodyguard.

If you had to pick one night in your high school life to actually look like money, make it prom night. Comb that hair, shave that budding mustache, and invest in a suit that isn't shiny, too big or a mint-green hand-me-down from an older brother.

All right, you can never be Diego Luna in "Dirty Dancing 2," but at least try to put some effort in your two-step. After making it clear that you "don't dance," moving your feet—and not just shaking your head—will still be appreciated by your date.

If your prom turns out to have the fun factor of a school symposium, bringing your date out for some coffee or midnight grub rather than a raucous after-party is always favorable. Showing her a great time with good conversation is your golden ticket to a succeeding date.

### Don'ts

Girls devote almost an entire day to what you see when they finally emerge from their rooms. And that doesn't even include the dress. A compliment or two won't make you a cheesy catché, but ignoring your date's appearance will make you an ungrateful pig.

Considering you'll actually want to remember this night and bring your date home safely, lay off the booze. It's one party that can afford to be "lame" without the liquor. There'll be enough beer kegs in college, anyway.

Your prom isn't the last night you'll ever be in the presence of the opposite sex, so take it easy, tiger. Groping your date on the dance floor and telling her you've got motel reservations won't crown you prom king. It'll only label you a perv.

Do away with flashcard conversation or telling your date how many crunches you do at the gym. You can impress her by listening and being genuinely interested in what she has to say, not by how many topics you can talk about or by treating her like a course or

You will never be Heath, Freddy, or that dude with the hot date. Acting like someone you're not will only put snags in your night and make your date uncomfortable. Your prom happens only once, so whether you're going with a girlfriend or a pity partner tagged by your mother, milk this night for what it's worth.

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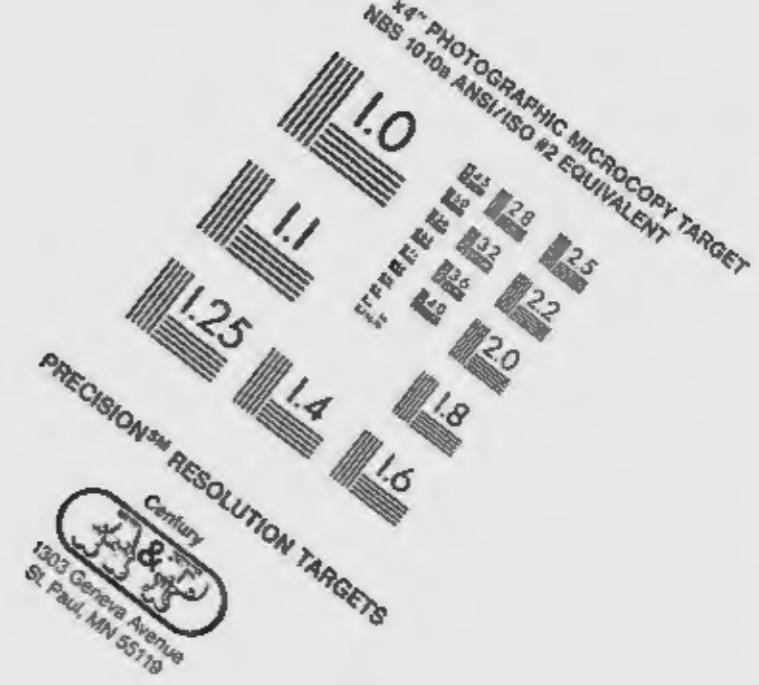
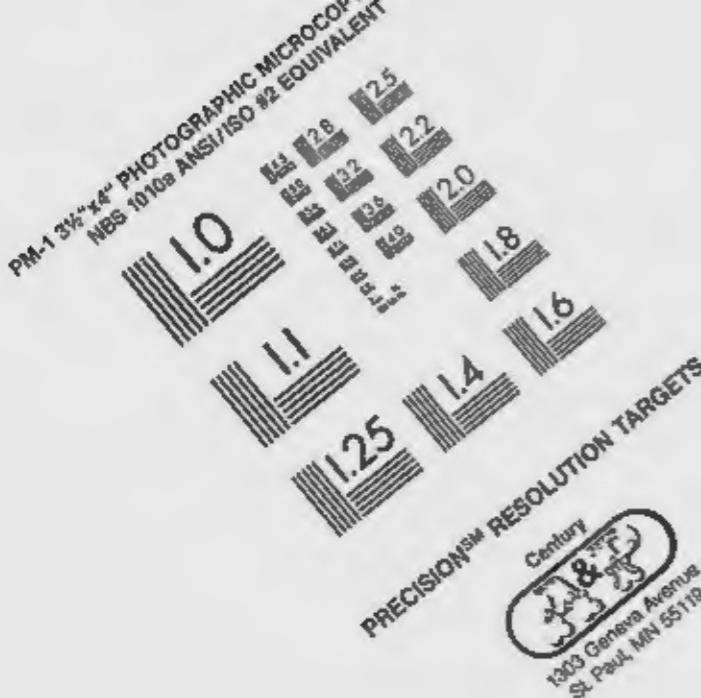
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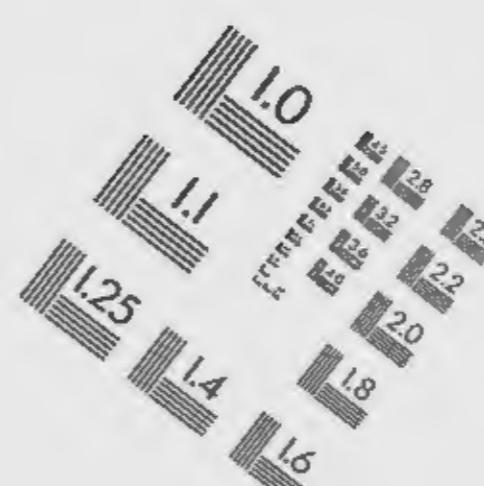
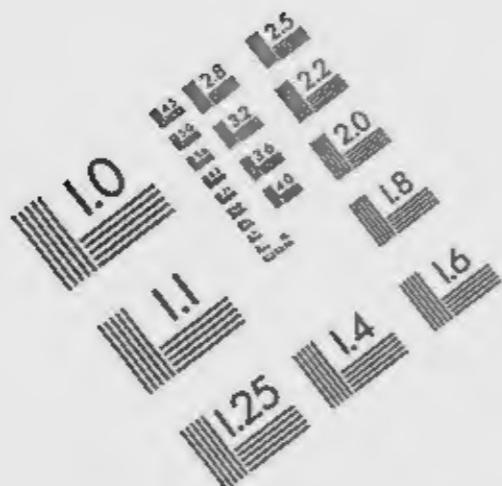
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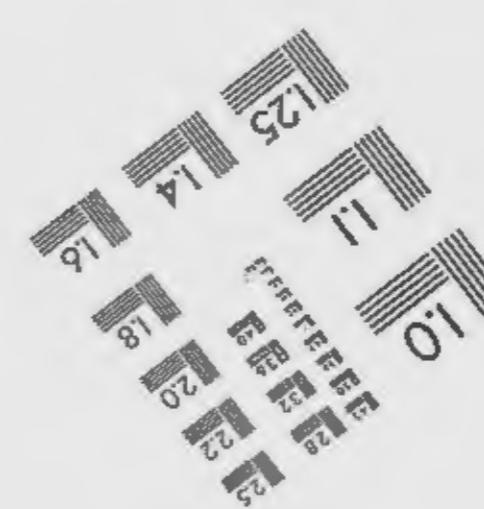
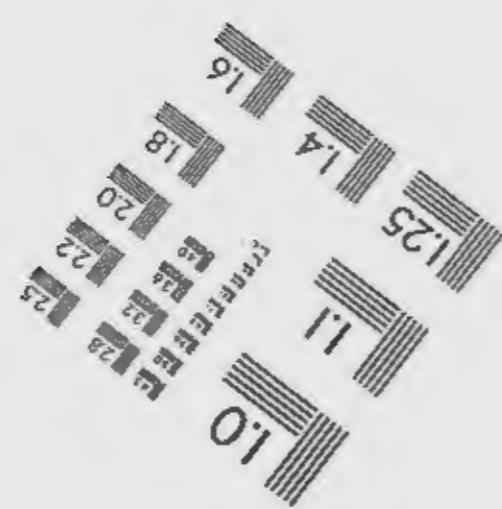
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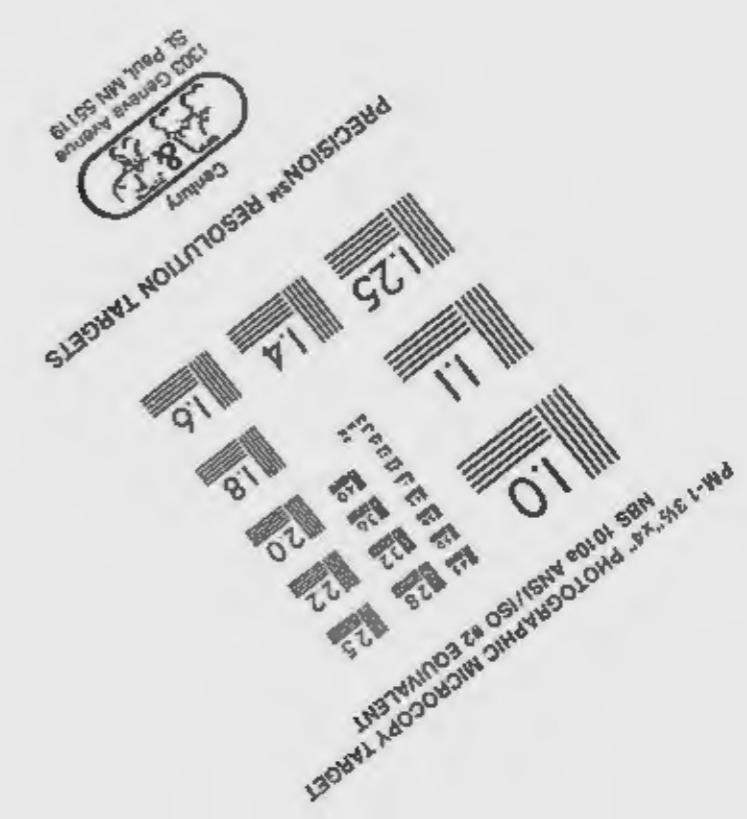


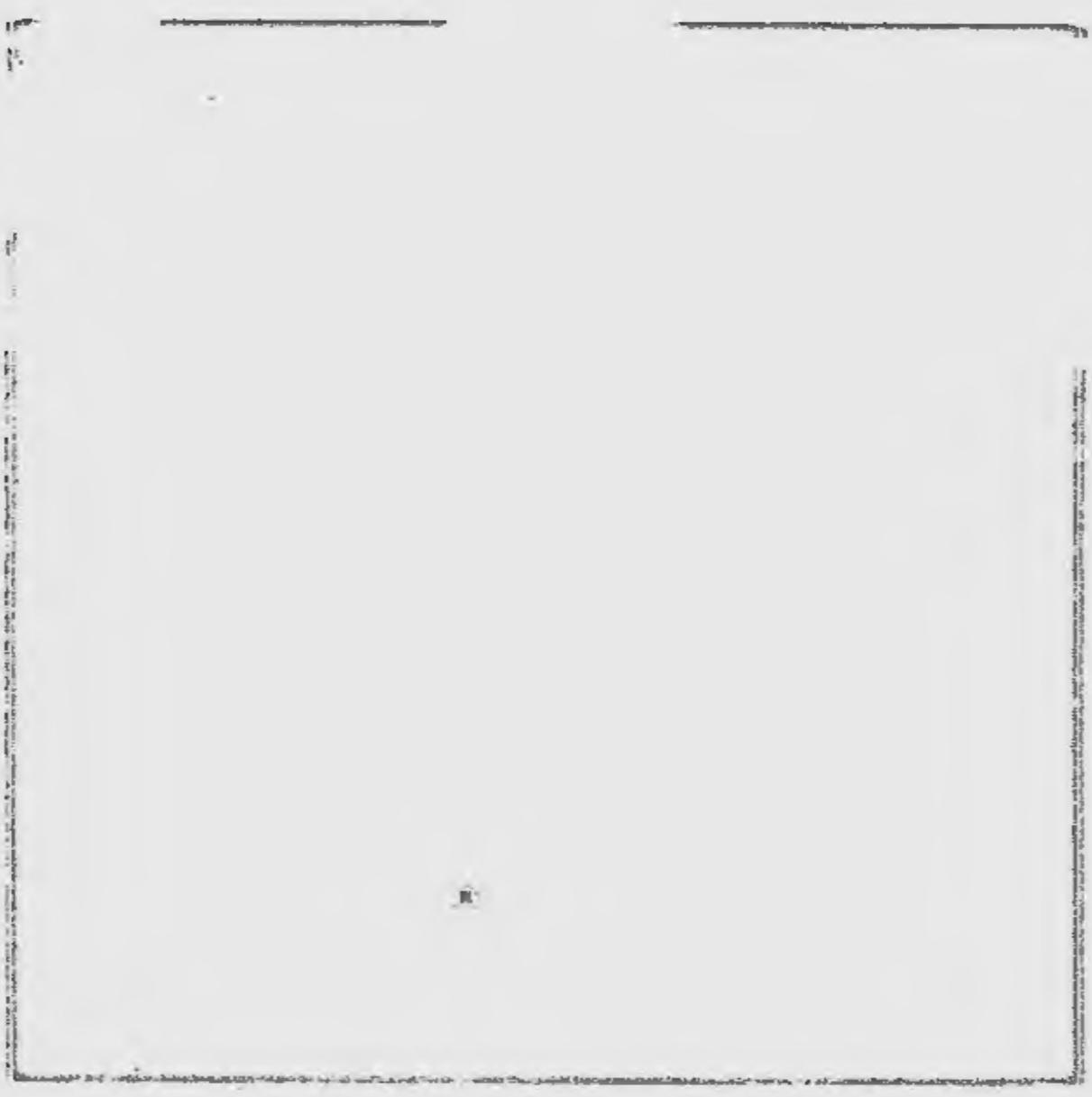
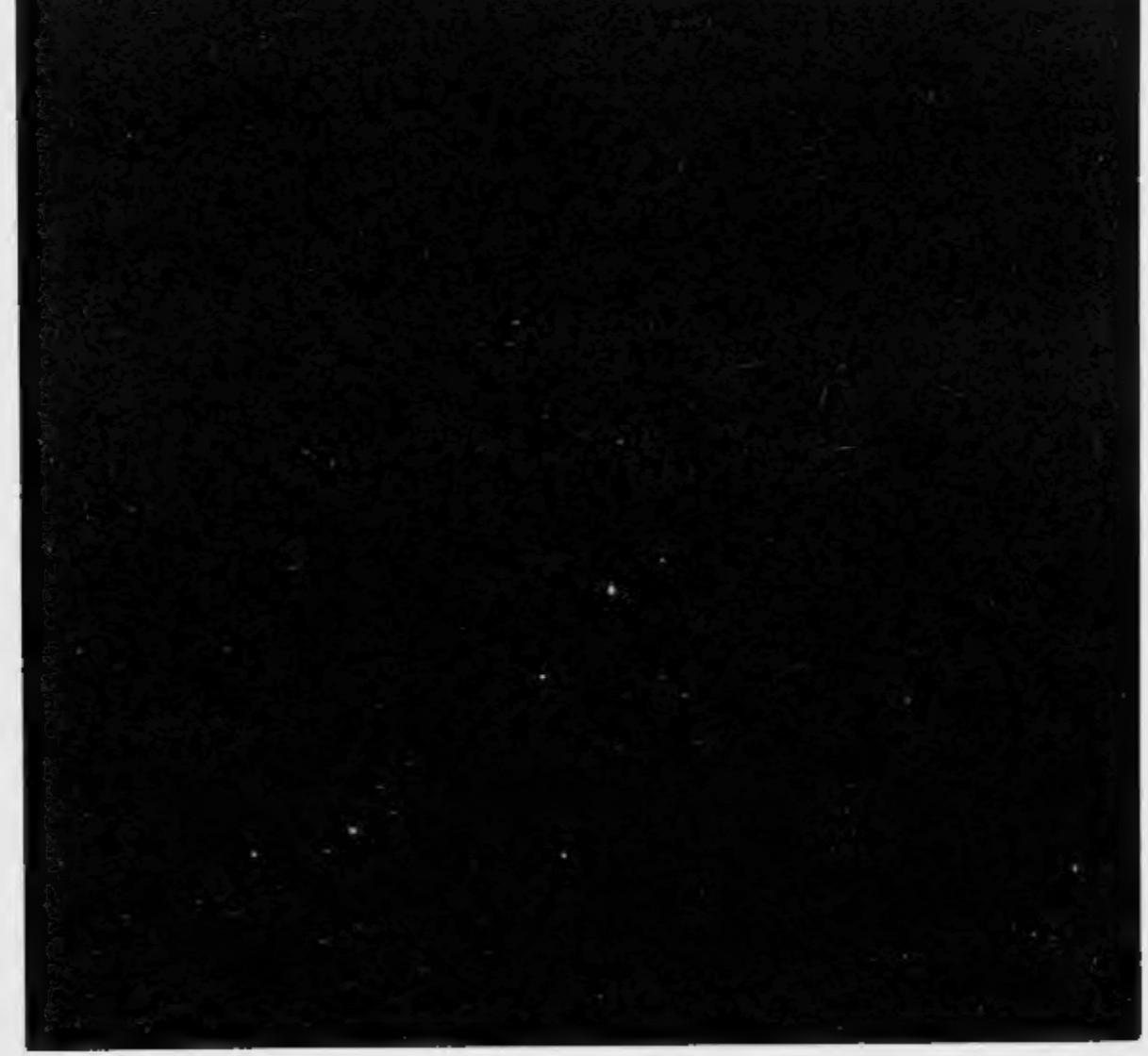
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